MUSIC

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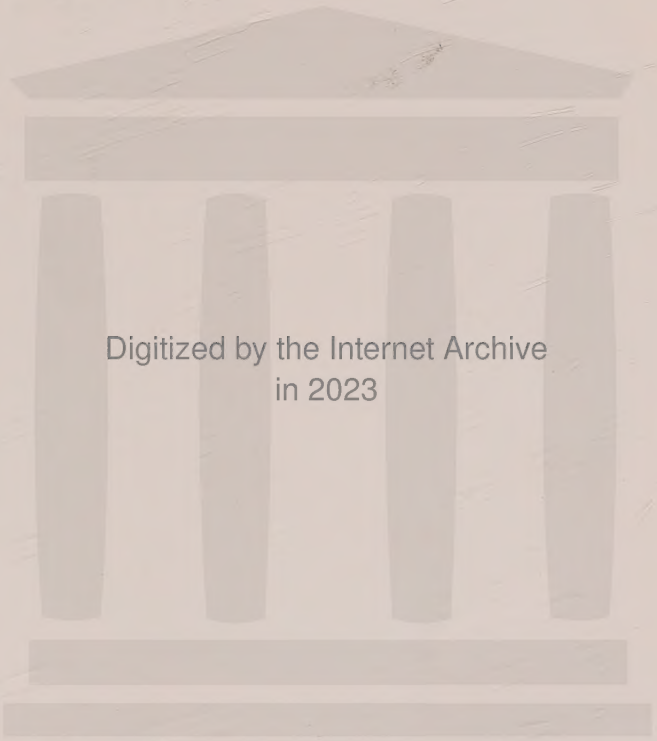
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Henry Purcell

From the Portrait attributed to Sir Godfrey Kneller.
(*National Portrait Gallery*).

MUSIC

by

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With a Preface by
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PREFACE

SO many books are written for beginners on the appreciation of music that I can be thankful that advancing age makes it unnecessary for me to read them, and when I do have to look into any of them I wonder whether the young people of to-day derive as much pleasure from them as I did at eighteen from reading Sir John Hawkins' *History of Music*. But I have read this book of Mrs. Creighton's with much enjoyment, for she is a musician who enjoys music herself and has the art of conveying that enjoyment to others. She has had enough experience as a teacher of the pianoforte to understand the minds of youthful readers, but she has the good fortune to have had no experience of lecturing to appreciation classes. This gives her book a fresh and unconventional point of view. She does not trouble her readers with a mass of historical detail, but talks about the music which she has herself heard and enjoyed. She spares us the well-worn (and in most cases unauthenticated) anecdotes about the great composers; she prefers to tell us things which help us to realize the social environment in which they lived and made their music. It is a book for those who enjoy music and like to read about it for their own pleasure rather than from fear

of examinations ; and one advantage of its discursiveness is that it can be enjoyed by those who like to read comfortably, dipping here and there at haphazard.

EDWARD J. DENT.

CAMBRIDGE,
March, 1928.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

IN the few pages of this book I have wished to show as far as I could how music has played a part in life, and I have wished to describe, however incompletely, music of different periods and by different composers that can still be enjoyed, whose beauty of sound and poetic content we find in performance, whether we sing and play it ourselves or hear it produced by others.

I am greatly indebted to Professor E. J. Dent for many most valuable suggestions, to Mr. A. M. Hind, without whose knowledge and help I could not have found the original prints which are reproduced as illustrations, and to Mr. Geoffrey Whitworth for his valuable assistance in the arrangement of the book.

U. C.

INTRODUCTION

LISTENING TO MUSIC

THE world is full of people who have a natural capacity for enjoying music. Almost every one is musical if being musical means having the power to enjoy music and know what is good music when you hear it. It was ordinary people who in past generations made, sang and altered folk-songs and who sang and danced at festivals and revels of many kinds, and such people still have a sure and excellent taste, for the power to judge the quality of musical compositions does not belong exclusively to cultivated people.

In listening to music it is not the technical details that are of the first importance. It is not necessary to know whether a piece is in sonata form, what keys it passes through and what rhythms underlie it, in order to understand what that piece means. What does matter is that the listener should gain a definite impression from the work as a whole, perhaps of lyric beauty or dramatic vividness, or that immeasurable poetry of feeling which lies beyond the reach of words.

Some listeners, when they first begin to know something of the technical side of music—the themes, the modulations, the partwriting, etc.—fall into the mistake of listening to these details only, and in their

effort to hear them they do not really listen to the music at all. Such details can be heard passing, as it were, as we listen to the flow of the whole work, but they must not distract the mind from the impression made by the whole from the beginning to the end.

Others, again, in the pleasure of listening to sweet sound, lose sight of what emotions the special sounds they hear arouse in them, not realizing that music demands from the listener not only reception but an active response in feeling. Such listeners do not distinguish between the charm of beautifully written and performed sounds and the still greater beauty of such sounds when they convey specially lovely and vivid emotions with restraint and power.

This is not to say that cultivation does not add to our powers of enjoyment, for it certainly does. An intimate acquaintance with different compositions, the increased power of hearing we can develop, and the power to understand the means each composer used, give an extraordinarily increased pleasure and pleasure of new kinds. To hear the different threads of sound, the different parts that make the mass of beautiful sound in contrapuntal music, gives not only a heightened interest in the music, but the power to receive innumerable lovely details which would otherwise pass us by; and to be accustomed to the music of different periods is another expansion of our powers. Music of a given period may affect us as strange in

sound, but as we get accustomed to that strangeness fresh sources of pleasure are open to us as well as the realization that music is a constantly changing art, and sounds used at one period with their own special beauties are often quite different from the sounds used in another age.

Music gives pleasure, that is its great characteristic, and all music, of whatever date and however composed, lives only because it gives pleasure when it is performed. All music, too, is alike in that it arrests our attention and arouses in us moods which we may not be able to define in words, but which are of infinite kind and variety. So varied are the pleasures it can give that among the mass of present-day music we need to distinguish the special pleasures we find worth while, without shutting our ears to new sounds which may present difficulties at first but prove themselves worthy music at further hearing.

And what quantities of lovely music wait to be enjoyed. How many people know even half the works of Bach, Mozart, Handel and Haydn, or are really intimate with the beautiful music of the Elizabethan age? How many, too, know all that Gluck, Weber and Beethoven wrote, or, to come to a later period, how many have even heard the best works of Liszt, Berlioz and César Franck?

It is easier to listen to some musical works than others. The simple melody of a folk-song, or one of the beautiful tunes of a Haydn minuet, both perfect

in their own way, do not demand any great response from a hearer. But a work which is based on themes where the same theme expresses different emotions as it occurs in different ways, and one emotion flows out of another, and sometimes silence, sometimes passages of expectancy form part of the power of the music as it grows to a climax or moves along like contemplation, each passing phrase and detail making part of the general impression—such a work demands a continued response from the hearer ; and it is only by repeated hearings and continued response that it is possible to appreciate fully the general impression of the whole work, and further the many varied and detailed beauties that form part of it.

For instance, anyone who hears a Mozart opera for the first time probably only gains a general impression of the dramatic power and beauty of the whole, and the only details really clear to him are the marvellous melodies. But someone who by repeated hearing finds each time fresh passages to which he can respond and which he understands, soon begins to appreciate the recitative with its vivid changing moods, and the concerted pieces for several singers in which the character of each singer comes out, and learns to understand the characters in the light that Mozart's vision throws upon them. In *The Magic Flute*, for instance, how different is the light-hearted music sung by the three ladies from the clear, untroubled sounds that come with the entrance of the three youths or Genii.

And in the long recitative between the priest and Tamino, how full of certainty are the phrases of the priest, how passionate and questioning are Tamino's responses, and after their long dialogue, the entry of the low-toned melody for a few bars has a depth of feeling that gives a sense of completion and a promise of further beauty to come.

So also in a work of Bach's like the fugue of the Toccata and Fugue in C minor for piano. At a first hearing a listener probably hears nothing more than the simple dignity of the theme, the web of sound surrounding it, sometimes lessening, sometimes growing and increasing to a climax, and the insistent rhythm holding the long work together ; and he has a sense of piling up sound and intensity till the whole work ends in a wave of conviction and certainty. But further hearings reveal innumerable moments of varied beauty. The reiterated theme expresses now appeal, now power, now melancholy, now tenderness ; the episodes have a fairylike mystery ; a passage of breathless expectancy leads to the one entry of the theme in a major key, high up, floating in with great sweetness ; and these are only a few of the beauties that show themselves to those who cultivate their powers of listening and understanding.

Music must be heard to be understood. To describe themes and the different moods they may arouse in a hearer does not give the sense of how a work is built up from them. And to talk of one part imitating

another, or the entry of a certain key and other technical details, is only to provide a way of reminding ourselves of particular places or effects in the piece so that we are able to give ourselves a verbal map of a work, the real work being sounds which are not words nor our description of them.

It is possible to gain a fairly good knowledge of many musical works by playing and humming them to ourselves. This usually in the case of older works where we are accustomed to the kind of sounds they make and can therefore imagine them to ourselves. Even in these older works a proper performance would probably show us many things we had not been able to imagine, but we get an idea by ourselves of the melodies, the accompanying parts, the rhythms, the speed, the contrasts and moments of climax, and in an orchestral work it is possible to imagine where the trumpets sound, where the violins play, etc. But some music must be heard in a proper performance to be understood at all. For instance, Berlioz' imagination worked among orchestral sounds. He imagined and heard new sounds from many different instruments. The instruments he used are so varied and the way they are used combined or in contrast with one another makes such unusual sounds and effects that it is impossible to any but a very cultivated and talented musician to imagine them at all. Added to this, the effect of the music depends on these unusual sounds and the meaning of the music is there when the

sounds are what he meant them to be. This, then, is music that must be heard in its own medium to be understood at all.

Listening to a musical work performed by a great player or conductor is like hearing a great actor in a well-known play. As the actor speaks the listener hears phrases full of meaning and poetry he had never imagined to himself as he read the words. When the play is over he has a remembrance of many fresh details of thought and poetic meaning. So in music a good performer makes the music live in ways which give us increased understanding of it. As we listen we can also discriminate between a performance which provides a fresh illumination to the music, and that which is not inspired by the ability to create anything fresh, sometimes not even expressing the beauties we already know for ourselves.

As music expresses itself in its own way, not the way of words, so words about music have a very limited use. They can, however, make some preparation for listening to music by explaining to a certain extent the different kinds of music written at different times, and by giving some idea of the special characteristics of different composers and periods. Words, too, can give some idea of the nature of different composers' contributions to music and its literature, whether their music added to the ideal of symmetrical form or how they enlarged the boundaries of musical expression. Words also can show something of the

difference in the means used to make music at different periods. But only in hearing can a listener gain his true understanding of music and expand his powers of appreciating beauties, emotions and ideas he could not have aroused in himself. As he listens he encounters with a peculiar, because a musical, vividness, those characters and beauties created by the great composers ; he also learns to know the composers themselves each with his unique vision, and each expressing his own personality, his own outlook and his own ideals, and some like Mozart and Bach with their unsurpassed depths of spiritual power.

CHAPTER I

EARLY MUSIC

MUSIC has always enhanced the joy of life, and from earliest times it is certain that man has enjoyed music. From records of all periods we know how music entered into the life of all kinds of people in innumerable ways. Music was used for dancing and singing, and it made sound which was not just noise but a beauty in itself, to which men could listen for hours with many different but always pleasurable feelings.

In these ways music has always given pleasure, and still does. Even now on the South African veldt you may meet a Kaffir with a rude instrument made of little pieces of metal wired on to wood, each giving a different note, and he will play over and over to himself the quiet twanging sounds. Again, anyone who travels in Arab countries may hear an Arab shepherd in some secluded spot playing quietly to himself on a soft-toned pipe. Such pipes have been used for thousands of years. There are pictures of them on Greek vases, some have been found in Egyptian tombs, and two of these Egyptian pipes are in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. This pipe is just a reed like a bamboo with a little mouthpiece and a few holes cut down the front over which the fingers can be placed

in order to change the notes. The Arab shepherd plays very few notes over and over again making pleasing, peaceful music.

Music has developed and become much more intricate than such primitive sounds, but in olden days every one enjoyed music, not at concerts for they did not exist then, but in their daily life.

In the days of our forefathers, when each nobleman's hall was the one room in which all members of the household, from the highest to the lowest, ate their meals or sat at their indoor occupations, life was very primitive, but a great deal of music went on. Each season of the year had special festivities. For instance, in springtime the peasants would decorate themselves with flowers and leaves and go in procession dancing through the fields. They would bring branches out of the woods and choose a king or queen to rule them. At harvest and other times there were special ceremonies with dancing, music and singing, in which many joined. Such festivities were very frequent, and some of these amusements still survive in the May-day dances and Christmas mummers who come round to sing and act.

Wherever there was a monastery there was music in the Church services, and at certain festivals plays to music were part of the service. Not the least enjoyable were the visits of wandering minstrels, for minstrels travelled and came from foreign countries

bringing news and providing with their music one of the greatest pleasures then known.

So we know that a great deal of music went on and we can trace something of how music developed from simple primitive sounds to the music we hear now. But of the actual sounds of early music we know very little. The notes used to make music have altered, the instruments used have changed, and in early times there were no means of writing music down, it was all learned by ear and much has been lost. But we know what a power music was, how it was used on all occasions and how invariably it accompanied the many amusements and festivities that then existed.

It is in European life that we find the most vivid picture of the influence and pleasure of music in daily life in innumerable ways, and it is in European music that we trace the development of sound from the few notes first recorded to the complicated but beautiful works we hear at modern concerts.

But music, of course, existed not only in Europe but all over the world, and some music of very ancient date from countries outside Europe still survives practically unchanged. Chinese music, for instance, can still be heard sounding as it did thousands of years ago. It is used on all state occasions and for all religious ceremonies, and the notes are sacred and may not be changed. Special metal tubes are kept which fix the notes, and the laws by

which music is made are also unchangeable. This ceremonial Chinese music sounds noisy to us, for it is all accompanied by gongs and bells. We get far more feeling of the charm and influence of music when we hear of a special instrument called a " kin " which Confucius loved. He would shut himself up with it for weeks, enraptured with the sounds it made, so soft they were, like the breathing of the wind in the trees, and so full of mystery.

Indian music provides another music of ancient date which we can still hear and which is also very unlike European music. For one thing Indian music has notes unlike ours. We never hear in our music sounds so close to each other that they seem to glide up and down like the song of a bird or the sound of wind, but Indian music is made partly with such sounds. Indian musicians accompany themselves on a stringed instrument, and while they sing they play continuously two notes, called a drone. Such sound is very unusual to our ears. Almost the only music Europeans now hear with a drone is that of the bagpipe. The bagpipe plays a droning note all the time as well as the tune to which we listen. It is a very ancient instrument. The Greeks and Romans used it and it was played in the Middle Ages. When we listen to it we realize how stirring and stimulating music made with it can be, even if it seems harsh compared with the music to which we are now accustomed.

CHAPTER II

GREEK MUSIC

THE earliest European music of which we know anything is the music of Greece. Poetry and dancing entered largely into Greek life and were always to musical accompaniment. There were numerous dances—at funerals, at festivals and for social amusement; many of the daily exercises such as leaping, running and throwing a disc were performed to music; processions were frequent and they were always to music; Greek plays were sung entirely to music and their orators spoke to the sound of flutes.

Music was an important part of Greek boys' education and some of the contests at the Greek Games were for music. The Greeks gathered from every city for these contests and the victors were crowned with wreaths. It was about 500 B.C. when Midas, the flute-player, won his crowns of bay and when Pindar wrote an ode in his praise. So highly was music honoured, and anyone who excelled in it, that when Midas returned to his own city, Agrigentum, the whole population went out to meet him and he marched in a procession through the town while Pindar's *Ode* was sung.

The notes used to make music in Greece were arranged in regular order and each different succession

was called a "mode." As the intervals between the notes of a scale can be larger or smaller, many changes can be made by altering the place in the succession of notes where such larger and smaller intervals occur. With the Greeks each different arrangement was a "mode," they had many different modes and in this their music is unlike modern music which for the last 300 years has been written on only two successions of notes, the major and minor scales.

Music made from modal scales can still be heard. Tunes have been preserved made from the Greek modes as they were arranged by St. Ambrose when he lived in Milan 1,600 years ago. Also many of the songs that of late years have been collected from country singers, folk-songs as they are called, are made from modes.

These tunes made with modal scales have the special powers of expression peculiar to each mode, and they are also unlike our modern music in another way. A modern tune always has an accompaniment, and we are so accustomed to this that when a melody is played without, it sounds rather empty to us and we also unconsciously hear beneath the melody the sounds that we should expect to accompany it. Even if we do not actually hear such sounds, if anyone improvises an accompaniment we know at once when the player plays what sounds to us right or wrong with the tune. So that the tune itself really gives us some knowledge of the notes that go with it.

But this early modal music had no accompaniment; it was purely melody and such modal tunes imply no other notes, no accompaniment. In fact, most people who can improvise an accompaniment to a modern melody cannot do so to a modal melody. What they play sounds wrong. Simple accompaniments can be put to such tunes, indeed educated people now enjoy singing them in this way, but these tunes were made at a time when notes were not combined, when no accompaniment was thought of, and a true folk-singer would probably not recognize his tunes when they had an accompaniment. To him they are purely melody.

Another purely melodic modal form of music is to be heard in the service of the Roman Catholic Church. The Latin words are still sung to the melodies made for them in the early years of the Christian Church. These melodies are called "plainsong." They also belong to a period before harmony was in use, and they have special beauties of their own in rhythm, in passages of sound and in expression. They form as it were a special world of music like the Latin language to which they are set.

The use of modes gradually died out and their special beauties were ignored while European music developed on the lines of combining notes, extending instrumental resource, and lengthening works in such ways that audiences could give continued response. But modern composers are beginning to understand

the special beauties of modes, and no longer limit themselves to two scales.

The two scales used almost exclusively for such a long time had a particular property the modes did not possess, that was the sense of " key." To our ears one note, in either scale, is the keynote, the most important, the most final. We hear the others in relation to that note. We also expect notes to combine with each other to make what we call " chords," and these chords help our ears to recognize which is the keynote, and in fact the music we are most accustomed to, arouses a strong feeling of expectancy. We listen expecting the keynote or we are surprised by a change of key ; and the combination of sounds in " harmony " enhances this feeling of expectancy. This sense of key was a late development in the history of music.

We do not now know what Greek music sounded like compared to our modern music, but we can realize the varied and moving power of modal music when we hear some of the lovely folk-tunes written in different modes and expressing varied emotions with extraordinary beauty and certainty.

Music does not accompany our daily life as it did that of the Greeks, but it is to the Greeks we owe one kind of modern music, the opera. Greek plays were operas, they were sung to music, and it was when musicians began to imitate Greek drama that opera was born.

Peasants Dancing

From an early printed copy of Petrarch published in Augsburg, 1532
(*In the British Museum*).

CHAPTER III

FOLK-MUSIC

THE folk-tunes that have been collected of late years are all songs, for in olden times tunes and words and often dancing all went together. These folk-songs have grown up among simple people, and no one knows how or when they began. Some of the tunes are set to stories in verse, the same tune to each verse of the poem ; these we call ballads. Some have words about the festival of Christmas, these we call carols; and there are folk-songs of all sorts, some gay or humorous, some sad and plaintive.

Until lately these folk-songs were not written down : they were handed down by ear from generation to generation. Many therefore have been lost and those that have survived have changed and grown in interest and expression as centuries passed till the folk-songs of to-day are some of the most perfect and beautiful music we have.

Folk-music has provided the material for all music. It was the notes used in simple peoples' tunes and dances that were arranged in order by more learned musicians to make scales, and the vivid and beautiful melodies produced by the folk of each nation have taught musicians the true balance and expression of sounds. Also a great deal of the music we hear is made

from phrases and rhythms first created in folk-songs and dances and afterwards worked up by musicians into long musical works.

Nowadays we expect music to be composed by a musician, and such music, if the musician is a genius, is a great possession. This is what may be called art music—that is, it is not just the spontaneous expression of a person who may love music but has learnt nothing about it ; it is the work of a man who knows what he is doing and how other musicians have written, who has in fact learnt the art of music.

When we speak now of music, unless we especially say " folk-music " we mean art music, for the music we hear at concerts, the music we play and sing ourselves, is music written by professional composers. But folk-music, the music that is the daily accompaniment of simple peoples' lives and can be found in every country and among all sorts of people, is the foundation of all the rest.

In a country like Russia, where life is more primitive, this folk-music is still a part of daily life. Any Russian workman who comes to the house to do some carpentering or mend a pipe will sing an old song all the time. The boatmen have special songs for their work, the peasants have songs that accompany all they do, sowing, reaping, harvesting, and in fact Russia has enormous numbers of lovely folk-songs which are still a part of simple Russian life.

The same could be said of England long ago when

there were songs for every kind of occupation and even for selling wares along the streets. The only one of the selling songs we now hear is "*Who'll buy my lavender*," and even that with its short and lovely melody makes us realize how much more music there must have been in the streets than we hear now, for present-day cries are just shouts of papers, fruit and such-like things with very little melody about them.

Many of the old English songs for work survive. There are still "shanty songs" for sailors in sailing vessels which help them to keep time at their work and pull the ropes together; and though the songs used in country life have died out of use we can realize from those that have been collected how many there were and how widespread was their use.

CHAPTER IV

RHYTHM, MELODY, HARMONY AND QUALITIES OF SOUND

BEFORE we come to consider more closely the manner in which music entered into mediæval life and the varied ways it developed, it may be interesting to define a little more exactly some of the qualities of music itself. Certain elements that combine to form music as we understand it can be appreciated by every one. There is the element of tune or melody, there is also the element of rhythm, and in modern European music there is what is called harmony, the combining of sounds together.

One of the most primitive kinds of music is purely rhythmic, just the beating of a drum by the hand. There is no tune, for the note does not change, but the alternation of quick and slow beats makes a regular rhythm. We can hear such music if we listen to a drum and fife band when the fifes stop playing and the drums continue to beat the rhythm of the march. Primitive peoples still enjoy such music. They beat drums to celebrate victories, or to call their warriors together to battle, or for dances. If you were to watch a negro in an African village beating his drum and making wonderfully regular sounds, while the rest dance round in a circle brandishing sticks and lifting their

feet in time to the music, you would see how much they enjoy it and how exciting they find it.

The rhythmic sounds of a drum by itself do not seem to us like music, for in our music rhythm is combined with melody and we are accustomed to listening mostly to the melody. But rhythm remains a very important part of our music, and we can plainly hear it if we listen to one of the most simple and obvious forms of rhythm, a march or a waltz. Then, as well as the tune, we hear something quite distinct, the regular beat making the rhythm of the dance.

The rhythm of primitive music is simple and obvious like the rhythms of our dances and marches. But just as melody has developed in interest and expression, so rhythm has become more varied. This is particularly noticeable in songs, for words are written in many rhythms, sometimes regular as in verse, sometimes irregular as in prose. Even folk-songs do not all have the simple rhythms of dances, they have the varied rhythms suitable for accompanying words. This intricacy of rhythm is part of their beauty.

In modern music with its long-developed melodies and its wonderful combinations of notes, rhythm is still of the greatest importance, indeed an essential part of music. Music lives when it is performed and in performance it is the rhythm that makes the vitality and vividness of the music. Players in the present day have attained such command over their instruments that they can play and sing with great facility and great

beauty of sound, but important as this is it loses much of its effect unless they have a living feeling for rhythm. We may hear the same work played by two different performers or conducted by two different conductors. Both the performances may have many beauties, but if one performer has a beautiful feeling for rhythm and the other has not, the difference is amazing. The whole meaning of a piece can change with a change of rhythm and what might be a stirring melody with the right rhythm becomes sentimental when the rhythm is lacking.

For instance, in the last movement of Beethoven's Emperor concerto, played by a solo piano and orchestra, the piano enters with the beginning of the theme very softly, then pauses, plays again a few notes of the theme and at last breaks into the complete melody that begins the movement. When a player who has a beautiful sense of rhythm plays this passage, how arresting it is. It is not only the quality of the sound he plays that makes the difference, but the pace at which he plays the notes, the pauses which fill his listeners with a breathless expectancy, and the vivid feeling of life and movement that they experience when the full theme appears. Other players without this rhythmic sense may pause, they may play the notes beautifully and absolutely in time, but they arouse no great sense of expectancy, and the theme, though beautiful, has no sense of pulsating life.

Such a sense of rhythm is rare but it is one of the

greatest means of expression. The pace, the pauses, the accents, all the details that it is impossible to describe, these make the rhythm, and it is the rhythm that holds the sounds together and gives the music its meaning. Often when listening to a concerto, a work for solo instrument with orchestra, we hear the soloist play a theme which arrests and delights us, the same theme played by the orchestra sounds dull and lifeless in comparison. Then perhaps the next time the orchestra plays the theme the players imitate the soloist and we experience a sense of new life in the music. Such a feeling is due purely to the rhythmic sense expressed by the soloist. And this sense of rhythm which is so important does not only show its importance in any given theme but throughout a whole work. Some players make us feel that a piece of music is in separate parts or that parts are rather uninteresting, but a performer with a good sense of rhythm makes us feel as if the whole work were held indissolubly together. The music may indeed have different themes and melodies with passages of connecting sound, but a performer with rhythm plays each theme with such certainty of rhythmic feeling and the connecting passages at such speed, with such pauses and quickenings, as convey his own feeling of carrying on what we have just heard and waiting for what will come next, that the music never seems to break into separate pieces but sounds vivid and alive from beginning to end. It carries our interest on without flagging. The simplest tune played by

an artist with a lovely sense of rhythm has a beauty and feeling all its own. His rhythm makes the music live in a way that is impossible to the commonplace player.

In rhythm therefore lies much of the vitality of music, but in speaking or thinking of music the first thing we usually think of is the tune or melody. That is to us the essence of music. Other arts may give rhythm, but no other art gives tunes, though we always hear a rhythm underlying a tune when we think of one.

Now, we have further become accustomed to music which is made not only of rhythm and melody, but by the combination of several notes played together ; this we call " harmony." Harmony is a development of music that only occurred in European countries, but we are now so accustomed to its beauties that we scarcely ever imagine a tune without an accompaniment.

But in modern music it is not only that every melody has an accompaniment. Many different kinds of sounds are used together, such as voices and various instruments, violins, trumpets, flutes, etc., and there is interest in understanding something of the different kinds or qualities of sound made by these different instruments.

This difference of sound arises from a fact now known to musicians—that when a string vibrates, or a column of air in a pipe, not only does the whole string vibrate, but it vibrates in parts as well. The two halves of a string vibrate independently, and so does each

third, and quarter and so on. Each of these parts sends out a note of its own which is called a " harmonic " or partial tone, and the truth is that almost all the musical sounds we hear include some of the many sounds given out by each separate vibrating part or section, as well as of the sound of the whole string. Though the sound made by the whole string is the loudest, the other sounds are there making part of the sound. There are, however, some instruments which produce simple sounds with no harmonics. The Celesta, which makes the clear, bell-like, silvery notes heard sometimes in an orchestra, is one. Boys' voices also make a pure sound. But violins, pianos, and indeed most instruments, give notes which are made up of harmonics, and the quality of the sound of any particular instrument depends on which of the harmonics are audible. The first harmonics, the half string, the third of it and so on, make concordant sounds because the vibrations come so often together, but the notes from the smaller divisions are not so smooth.[1] They make a harsher effect with the original note given by the whole string. Such harsh harmonics sound very loudly in the quality of the American organ and make the some-

[1] In order to understand concordant sounds it must be remembered that a half string or column of air vibrates twice as fast as the whole, therefore the vibrations of the half and the whole synchronize at every second vibration. The same mathematical law affects the other divisions of the string or column, and the smaller the division the less often its vibrations synchronize with those of the whole.

what strident noise for which that instrument is famed. But in the violin it is the smoother harmonics which are heard, the others are inaudible, and from this comes the instrument's bright, clear tone.

The quality, therefore, of the sound of each instrument depends upon which of the harmonics go to form it. In some cases very few sound, in some the concordant ones, and in some the harsher ; and in some, again, certain of the harmonics sound loudly, while in others the same harmonics sound softly. All this affects the tone of the instrument, and it is by this difference that the sound of one instrument is distinguished from another as that of a flute is distinguished from that of a trumpet.

Sounds vary in another way, and that is according to the mechanical method by which they are produced. In instruments made with strings, the strings can either be hit (as in a piano) or played by a bow (as is the violin) or plucked (as happens when the mandoline or banjo is played). And all such sounds from strings are different from the sounds made by columns of moving air whether in a trumpet, a human voice, an organ, or any other wind instrument.

There is one use of harmonics which is very general and which may often be heard at concerts. When a violinist plays he sometimes produces very high, sweet, penetrating sounds quite different from the ordinary bright sounds of his instrument. These sounds are produced by touching the string on which he plays

lightly at one of the divisions in which it vibrates, and instead of the sound of the whole string being produced, the sound of one part only rings out clear and sweet. Such sounds are called harmonics, and they make a very definite and distinct effect.

When therefore we speak of music we may only wish to talk of the pleasure or special emotion it has given us. But we shall be able to understand more clearly about the music of different periods when we realize something of the meaning of rhythm, of melody, and of the various qualities of tone that have been made possible by the development of various kinds of musical instruments.

CHAPTER V

MEDIÆVAL MUSIC

WE have seen that when the Christian religion began to spread over the world, it carried music with it. The Fathers of the Church recognized the power of music, and popes and bishops realized its importance. From a very early date there were schools for Church singers.

The great Pope Gregory, who sent the first mission to Britain, was himself a musician. He supervised the choir school in Rome and helped to make a collection of all the music used in his day. This music is still called by his name, " Gregorian," and it contains some of the oldest tunes we know.

Music like this, made while harmony was still unknown, has not the sudden contrasts of our harmonic music, and is therefore much more smooth in sound. To listeners accustomed to modern music it may at first seem vague and impersonal, but a closer acquaintance reveals its stately dignity and the beauty of its uplifted feeling.

This early Church music was all for voices ; it was taught by ear and sung in unison, but learning it was very laborious. It may have been easy to learn some of the popular tunes, for the dances and songs that accompanied them helped. But Church music was different.

The first person who made the learning of this music easier was Guido d'Arezzo, a French Benedictine monk who lived in the eleventh century. He it was who first wrote down music as we do now, though in an imperfect way. The reigning Pope, John XIX, sent special messengers to ask Guido to go to Rome, and when Guido appeared with one of the music books which he had written, the Pope was so interested that he prolonged the audience until he had learnt Guido's method, his special way of grouping notes and writing them down.

Guido had noticed that a certain Latin hymn began each line of its verse on a different note of the scale, so he thought if singers just remembered the first word of the line together with the first note of the accompanying music, they would be able to pitch upon each note more readily as it was wanted in new tunes ; and from this simple device he built up a method of notation which was very successful. We still use most of Guido's syllabic names for the notes of the scale in the method of singing at sight called " sol-fa," though the method has been changed and perfected. Guido himself was delighted with his discovery, and wrote to a friend to say that he could now teach his choir-boys a new tune in a few days, whereas before it had always taken weeks for them to learn anything.

Though the Church music was difficult to learn it was evidently enjoyed, perhaps particularly when popu-

lar tunes crept into it in the form of hymns and some of the music used to accompany the plays given in church. Even in the eleventh century we hear of monks acting part of the Easter story in church, singing all the time, and plays made from many parts of the Bible were acted and sung in Benedictine monasteries. Later, students and nuns wrote plays with music and took part in them. So the Church festivals must have meant special enjoyment of music both by those who helped in the acting and singing and the numbers who came to watch and listen.

It was outside the Church that we first hear of music made with notes combined together. A little more than one hundred years after the Norman Conquest we know that in the North of England people, even children, sang in two parts, and that in Wales the people sang in many parts, whereas elsewhere in England and in all other European countries like France and Italy people sang only in unison.

Like many other new departures in music which were afterwards used and developed by the cultivated Church musicians, this new interest in music came from the people's love of beautiful sound, not from the trained musicians in the Church schools.

One of the first ways in which cultivated musicians combined notes in the Church service was when the voices sang a simple plainsong melody in unison and the organist played different notes forming a contrast to the singers. Or a gifted singer would sing different

notes from the rest, forming another melody or part against the unison body of voices. Such singing was called " descant," and such simple counterpoint against the settled tune had the name " faux bourdon."

We no longer hear descant in its primitive form, but the use of descant and faux bourdon in the modern service, though not usual, is very beautiful. The congregation singing in unison an old chorale or hymn tune while the choir sing a different melody rising at times above the old tune and floating up as it were from the basis of the well-known melody, makes a very lovely effect ; and the choir and congregation combining to sing a similar tune in unison making a fine body of sound against which the organ can play different accompaniments of varied kinds, also has great beauty. It is music of a special kind with special beauties of its own, for combined with the simplicity of the old tunes sung by a number of ordinary voices are the added beauties produced by the cultivated choir and organist, thus beautifying and enriching the well-known melodies in a simple and dignified way.

The fact that the first knowledge of singing in parts comes from England is very interesting, for it shows that thus early in the history of European music the English showed their special gift for this kind of music. This gift the English have never lost. The first known music for a choir of voices was written by an English composer ; the first music for voices that made musicians feel music was an independent art came, too, from

an English composer ; some of the most perfect choral music ever written was produced by the English composers of Tudor times, all these composers being doubtless inspired by the choirs they conducted, for English choir singing was famous from a very early date. English people still have a love of choral singing and such talent for this kind of music that their choirs are still the best, while English musicians still write lovely music for voices.

The Church, in mediæval times, had education entirely in its own hands, and among the cultivated musicians it trained were some who by their inventions specially helped to preserve music and make further developments possible. After Guido d'Arezzo's invention music could be written down and read at sight, and other cultivated musicians invented a way of writing music so as to indicate the duration of each note, that is, which notes were to be sounded for a long and which for a short time. By this means voices singing together could be sure of being exactly in time with each other.

But a great deal of the music that gave daily pleasure was purely popular, and this was the music made by minstrels. Minstrels, though they were disliked by the authorities, gathered together in numbers at fairs or for any festivity to provide music and entertainment just as nowadays we should expect gypsies to gather with their booths and merry-go-rounds. And on any great occasion, such as when Edward I's daughters,

Joan and Margaret, were married, the most important minstrels came to the festivities and were given a large sum of money for their services.

The earliest minstrels were the old Irish harpers and Welsh bards. They were poets as well as musicians and sang stories of heroic deeds to entertain and inspire their fellow-countrymen. The Irish harpers were famous all over Europe for their playing and singing. They were treated with the greatest respect, they were allowed free quarters by law, and so highly was their music considered that no slave was allowed to play the harp. No festivity was complete without the music they alone could provide, and it was their task to inspire their fellow-men with courage and enthusiasm, and incite them to new acts of bravery. So when any great event happened or any great ideas filled men's minds the bards and minstrels made fresh music.

France also had minstrels, and when William the Conqueror landed in England his minstrel Taillefer came with him, and at the battle of Hastings Taillefer rode singing in front of the Norman army and began the battle alone.

Some of the famous Irish harpers accompanied the Crusaders, those knights who vowed to rescue the sacred places of the Holy Land from the Turks, and among these knights were the first " Troubadours." They were noblemen who enjoyed the minstrels' music, and, feeling their own talent for it, composed songs, though they never sang them themselves ; they left

that to the minstrels and jongleurs, to whom they enjoyed listening.

The minstrels, though they were so popular and welcomed everywhere, were always regarded by the Church as vagabonds. But these knightly musicians had a different standing. With them began the music we are most accustomed to now, music that was an enjoyment of leisured people and loved for itself alone.

The Troubadours were knights of the age of chivalry, vowed to ladies' service, undergoing dangers for the lady whose favour they wore and to whom those specially talented in verse and music wrote songs.

The Troubadours came from the south of France. Later, knights who came from the north of France and who also wrote songs for their ladies were called "Trouvères," while in Germany the same noble writers of poetry and music were called "Minnesänger."

Church music was only for the services of the Church; the popular music of the minstrels was for everyday pleasure, for entertainment at noblemen's parties and to accompany weddings and all festivities. Now with these noble writers of love-songs began a music with special beauties of its own, a music which grew out of popular songs and dances and was cultivated by ever larger numbers of people who had time to enjoy sweet sounds made for them; for gradually life in Europe settled down and leisure became more general.

The first piece of written secular music, composed in

parts, and of a kind which still sounds beautiful to us, is called "*Sumer is icumen in*." Just at the time when Salisbury Cathedral was being built, when St. Francis was living in Italy and when Dante was writing his wonderful poetry, there lived in Reading Abbey a monk, John of Fornsete, who came from a village in Norfolk. He wrote this song for six voices, not to sacred words but about the joy of English country life. It was not till two hundred years later that we come upon any other music that sounds so sweet to our ears.

Then came the work of John Dunstable. His is the first music we know written in parts and in a manner which is familiar to modern ears. It does not sound like an experiment in sound ; the harmonies are sweet, each part with an interest and melody of its own, each phrase belonging to the phrase that follows, and sometimes one voice imitating another so that the music has a definite shape and beauty of its own. In fact music was becoming an independent art, something you could enjoy by itself for the beauty of its sound and the interest of its parts.

All this early written music is for voices, and English choir singing, as we have mentioned, was famous. When Becket visited France in 1159 he took choir-boys with him who walked in front of him singing whenever he entered a town, and this was considered an English custom.

We realize how much this singing was enjoyed when we read in Chaucer of a little schoolboy learning his

lessons but listening all the time to the choir singing until he too could sing by heart the words and tune they sang.

Life was changing and the position of musicians outside the Church was much improved. It was soon no longer necessary if you wished to be a musician to be either a wandering minstrel or belong to a church choir. Minstrels were attached to the Courts of Kings, foreign princes sought their services, and players and singers were liberally rewarded. There is an account of Edward III listening just before the battle of Winchelsea to the music of a German dance which the famous knight Sir John Chandos had just brought back. The minstrels played and sang, Sir John with them, and only stopped when the look-out cried that he saw a Spanish ship approaching.

It was not long after Chaucer's death (in 1400) that the Chapel Royal was founded, of which Dunstable himself was a member. The Chapel Royal was a private choir founded by the King to sing the Church services every day, and the best musicians were given an independent position in it. They heard beautiful singing and were expected to compose music for the singers, and it was a constant encouragement to them in their art. It was thus that Dunstable was encouraged to write his sweet-sounding music.

Each succeeding King and Queen of England was proud of the Chapel Royal. When Henry V was in France he sent for his Chapel to celebrate Easter and

to walk before him when he entered Rouen Cathedral after the surrender of that town. Every important visitor to the English Court heard this famous choir, and many said there were no sweeter singers in the world. Henry VIII, who was himself a composer, wrote two masses which were sung by his Chapel.

Noblemen soon followed the King's example, and foreign courts too founded private choirs, and as time went on the principal musicians in these choirs were expected not only to provide music for the Church service but for all sorts of entertainments ; concerts in the palace or house to which they belonged, music at banquets and musical interludes in plays. Some of them even wrote plays, and all were encouraged to write not only sacred music but music for use outside the Church, or what we should now call secular music.

As well as these Court appointments, musicians were employed by the civic authorities, and we hear a great deal of civic pageants and revels accompanied by music. At a banquet in Italy early in the fourteenth century a separate entertainment was provided to accompany each course, and one of these entertainments was a choir of unseen voices which sang so sweetly that every one stopped talking. Still more magnificent must have been the scenes when a king or queen was welcomed by a great city. We read in a description of one of these receptions, of children dressed as angels who sang sweetly, and further on there were young girls singing as they offered wine from a fountain.

When Henry VI returned from France and entered London a tower was put up whence issued to welcome him various ladies representing heavenly gifts and singing, we are told, a heavenly melody.

Some of the most gorgeous entertainments seem to have been given by Duke Philip of Burgundy. At one of his famous banquets there was an enormous pie containing twenty-eight musicians who played at intervals, and another extraordinary feature of the entertainment was a model church containing three boys and a man singer, who sang before the meal began as well as during the repast.

So while music became a recognized art among cultivated musicians, it also attained a recognized place as an adjunct to civic and public functions of all kinds. Minstrels attained such standing that at last they founded a guild, had regular assemblies and meetings, and became very important people.

CHAPTER VI

POLYPHONIC MUSIC IN ENGLAND AND ON THE CONTINENT

WHEN Dunstable died in 1453 and was buried in London his work was famous all over Europe. Wherever his and similar music written by other Englishmen was known, it influenced musicians by giving them a new aim and a new outlook on what music could be.

It must be borne in mind that this music for voices singing parts together was not quite the same as much modern choral music. Now we often hear one voice, probably the highest, sing the tune while the other voices sing notes that sound well combined with the tune in the manner of an accompaniment. Musicians who cultivated Dunstable's style of writing did not write like that. To them each part was equally important. Each voice had to sing a part that was a melody in itself. Music in this style of composition is called "counterpoint," and the sound of all the voices singing their combined melodies is called "polyphony."

The melodies were not very different from each other; in fact, they often imitated each other. Gradually musicians became so practised in this manner of writing that they could make each voice imitate the one before in short phrases, this is called fugue, or two

or more voices would imitate each other the whole way through a piece, one voice starting after the other and singing the same tune, and this is called canon. One short canon familiar to every one is the tune to " Three blind mice," where three voices each sing the same tune, beginning after each other and yet combining in harmonious sound. Such a canon is also called a " round " or " catch," and singing rounds became later a very popular amusement.

Musicians now began to understand the beauty of blended sounds. Learned composers were still prominently interested in canons and fugues, but gradually as they put new parts and new melodies together they found new combinations, sometimes harsh enough, but sometimes affording a succession of blended sounds that was of magic beauty. So, while musicians remained interested in clever devices of academic composition, they were becoming more and more alive to the possibility of new and living beauties in sound.

In Italy in the fourteenth century a cultivated society was growing up which devoted a great deal of time to music. Young people played and sang and danced, and in Florence there lived the famous blind organist, Francesco Landini, who used a little portable organ, and who played so sweetly that every one who listened felt his heart overflowing with happiness.

Italy attracted all the best musicians of the day. The most famous composers were Flemish. These Flemish composers almost all passed part of their lives in Italy

The Organist

From an early print (*c.* 1500) by Israhel van Meckenem.
(*In the British Museum*).

in one of the celebrated choirs there, and all the best Italian choirs were conducted by them. They wrote some of the earliest secular part-songs called madrigals and they cultivated Dunstable's style of writing, adding new grace and lightness.

Of all the Flemish composers two stand out as especially famous, Josquin des Prés and Orlando di Lasso.

The music of Josquin des Prés (about 1445–1521) still has beauty for us. For sixty years he was considered the greatest musical genius the world had ever known, and his music for the Church, which was his most important work, was sung everywhere. It was during his lifetime that music was first printed (1498), and almost all the first published books of music contain works by him. Anne Boleyn, the wife of Henry VIII and mother of Queen Elizabeth, learned pieces by Josquin, and some of his music is to be found in a book which belonged to Henry VIII and is now at Cambridge. We are not likely to hear it often, for much of it is " florid " in style : that is, each voice sings a great many notes and long passages of music on a word or even a syllable, rather showing the wonderful way voices can move than adding expression to the music. But some of his combinations of sound are very beautiful, and we can appreciate them even if we do not understand the great learning that underlay his writing. He also wrote some light secular pieces for voices which still sound gay and delightful to our ears.

Orlando di Lasso (died 1594) was born soon after

Josquin's death, and by all accounts was a very lovable person as well as being a composer universally famous for his music. As a boy his voice was so beautiful that he was stolen three times from the choir school where he was studying music, and it was his conspicuous talent that gave him an appointment with a famous soldier, the commander of Charles V's army. With him he stayed in Sicily and Italy, and he was only a young man when he was appointed to conduct the choir at St. John Lateran, which was the most celebrated choir in Rome. He visited England in the suite of an Italian nobleman and then settled at Antwerp. Here he interested cultured people in music and gained their admiration and affection.

It was while he was becoming so popular and famous in Antwerp that he was given the appointment, where he added not only to his own musical fame but to the fame of the town to which he moved, Munich. The Duke of Bavaria, who founded the Royal Library at Munich and who was very fond of music, invited Lasso to direct the chamber music at his Court, and after a few years, when the old head of the Duke's chapel retired, Orlando, having learnt the language, was made master of the chapel. An old chronicler says that he behaved so gently that every one was " forced to love him, to respect him in his presence and praise him in his absence."

The Duke attended musical mass daily, and music accompanied all banquets. First the wind instru-

ments, then strings would play, and at dessert came the choir that Lasso conducted, and the Duke loved this music so much that he would leave the table to listen to it. He took a constant interest in Lasso's compositions, and it was he who suggested the composition of the seven penitential psalms. He had a wonderful illuminated copy made of this famous composition, which is still one of the treasures of the Munich Library. Lasso was sent all over Europe collecting musicians for the Duke. In Paris the special welcome he was given by the French King is mentioned by the well-known French poet Ronsard.

He appears to have been a wonderful conductor of the choir, his presence being an inspiration to the singers. He wrote an enormous number of works, sacred and secular, and though the music with which he was brought up was to us largely artificial, intricate and dry, Lasso's genius passed from such training to a beautiful simplicity and on to effects quite in advance of his day in their power of expression. The art of counterpoint, so great in the hands of Josquin des Prés, just as it became perfected and fluent in the hands of Palestrina, became gracious and sweet in the works of Orlando di Lasso.

Lasso lived at a time when great changes were taking place in the world. The revival of Greek learning in Italy which we call the Renaissance had filled men's minds with new beauties and new ideas, Columbus had just made his discovery of America (1497), the inven-

tion of printing in 1438 was helping to spread the new learning all over Europe and men's minds were full of those ideas about religion which were the cause of the Reformation. All this had a great effect on musicians. They sought constantly for new means of expressing the many new beauties they had to convey, and while perfecting the polyphonic style of music they also prepared the way for writing harmonic music such as we write to-day.

The most famous Italian composer at this time was Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525–1594). He wrote perfect polyphonic music for the Church, and we still enjoy its dignity, its purity and its smooth-flowing sound. His name, Palestrina, comes from a town in the Campagna near Rome where he was born. He spent almost all his life in Rome, first as a choir-boy and then as director of different celebrated choirs in that city. He died in 1594, when he was sixty-eight years old, leaving an immense amount of music for the Church, numbers of masses for different numbers of voices, nearly two hundred motets as well as music for the other parts of the Church services. One of the best known of his works is the setting of the *Improperia*, or *Reproaches*, which are a part of the service for Good Friday. This music is still considered some of the most beautiful he wrote, and it is still sung every year in the Sistine Chapel in Rome. We can understand something of the devotion he felt for the Church to whose service his life was dedicated when we hear

how, when he had completed his book of motets on words taken from the Song of Solomon, he carried the book himself to the Gregory who was then Pope and laid it at the foot of his chair. One of his most proud and happy moments must have been in 1575, when 1,500 singers from his native town came to Rome and entered the city singing his music while he conducted them walking at their head.

Spain, too, produced many excellent musicians at this time. The best known now is Vittoria, who received his musical education in Rome, but died in Madrid early in the seventeenth century. He wrote much beautiful sacred music with great depth of feeling. The requiem he composed on the death of the Empress Maria in 1605 is considered his most moving and beautiful work.

A great deal of music was published in Venice all through the sixteenth century. The Flemish composers who settled in Venice and Rome wrote much secular as well as sacred music. Many different titles were given to their settings of secular words for voices singing in parts, but the name by which such compositions are now generally known is "madrigals." Adrian Willaert (died 1562), who was appointed by the Doge to St. Mark's in Venice, wrote some madrigals, so did Arcadelt (born about 1514), another famous Fleming who settled in Rome. And even better known as a writer of this form of composition was Verdelot (died before 1567).

Returning to England where singing was so popular,

we find that throughout the sixteenth century Italian madrigals were well known and often sung. One of the singers of St. Paul's Cathedral, Nicholas Yonge, had regular song parties at his house in Cornhill and had music sent every year from Italy for his friends to enjoy. The general standard of musical attainment in England was high. Every educated Englishman was expected to be able to read music at sight and take part in madrigal singing. The English love of singing and the power of English composers to write lovely music for combined voices, which had been famous for hundreds of years, was never more clearly shown than in Tudor times. Beautiful as were the madrigals written by Italian and Flemish composers, they were quite surpassed some years later by English composers. The Elizabethan age, as it is called, is known as a time when much of the most beautiful English poetry was written. It was also an age when not only beautiful literature but perfect music was produced. The earlier English composers of Tudor times such as Fayrfax, Taverner, Tallis and Tye wrote mostly sacred music, but a few years later saw the publication of numbers of madrigals which are now considered the most perfect examples of this form of composition.

Twenty-five of the best-known composers combined to write madrigals in praise of Queen Elizabeth, and each wrote one madrigal in a collection called *The Triumphs of Oriana*, published in 1601. One of the composers is known to us, for he was the father of John

Milton the poet; one was the most musically gifted of them all, John Wilbye. Other well-known names are those of Thomas Weelkes, Thomas Morley and Orlando Gibbons.

John Wilbye (1574–1638) passed most of his life in Norfolk. He was born in that county, and for many years he lived with the family of Sir Thomas Kytson at Hengrave Hall, a house near Bury St. Edmunds, which can still be seen. There he took charge of the instruments and music belonging to the family and there he wrote some of his beautiful madrigals. The last few years of his life he passed in another house which can still be seen in Colchester. Here lived Sir Thomas Kytson's daughter, Lady Rivers, who had always been Wilbye's patron. So his life of music was all lived in connection with one family. He published two sets of madrigals. Now that there is a revival of interest in the lovely music of this period, Wilbye's madrigals have a special position. Some of them are acknowledged to be the most perfect madrigals ever written. They have a dignity, a depth of feeling and personal appeal that only he could produce. He had a great sense of beauty which is still vivid in these lovely compositions.

Thomas Weelkes (died 1623) published, when he was only twenty-two years old, a set of madrigals full of imaginative and original music, and further sets when he was organist at Winchester College. He was one of the greatest musicians of his time.

Thomas Morley (1558–1603), a very learned musician who excelled in light-hearted music, was organist at St. Paul's Cathedral. He published several books of madrigals or songs for several voices, some called by the name of ballets and canzonets. He also wrote a charming book on how to learn music, called *The Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, and a book of lessons for instruments playing together.

Orlando Gibbons (1583–1625) published only one set of madrigals, and his most famous music was written for the Church. It has a dignity and style peculiar to himself and he was one of the outstanding composers of his day.

English composers, so specially famous at this time for their lovely madrigals, wrote also much music for instruments and much sacred music. For many years no other country produced music at all comparable to these beautiful works. It was in England a golden age of music. But among the many names of famous composers one stands out above them all, William Byrd.

William Byrd (1543–1623) has been called the "Father of English music." Like most of the English composers of his time, he was a member of the Chapel Royal. He had been brought up a Roman Catholic and wrote his most beautiful music for the service of the mass, but during his lifetime the Reformation was in progress, and when the law was passed compelling every one to attend the new Church service under penalty of a fine, Byrd and his wife were constantly

summoned for refusing to obey the law. He lived usually outside London until he settled in Essex, at Stondon, where he was buried at the end of his long and active life.

Musicians in those days were often attached to a nobleman's house, and Byrd had private rooms with his own furniture at Lord Worcester's house in the Strand. London must have been an interesting place when Byrd was there, for it was just the time when Spenser was publishing his poem *The Faerie Queene* and when Shakespeare was making his fame by his plays. Some of the music written at that time seems rather severe and dry to us, but the best of Byrd's music is remarkable for the feeling it conveys. It seems to us as if he did not only want to write music that sounded well, but music that expressed the feeling of the words he chose. It is that that makes his music still beautiful to us. His 5-part mass, which is one of his best-known works and which can still often be heard, conveys to us feelings of deep devotion and great tenderness.

Byrd and other contemporary composers did not only write music in counterpoint, but sometimes instead of writing flowing melodies in every part they wrote the air for one voice and used the other voices to make blocks of sound to accompany the melody. These blocks of sound are what we should call chords. Such sounds used in blocks or chords made a new effect very different from the smooth flowing counterpoint which composers had hitherto written. The new style

was also bound up with the beginnings of that feeling for " key " which is what makes our music sound so different from the music of earlier times. In Byrd's day composers were only just beginning to appreciate key, with the result that some of their music sounds to us a little vague and unfinished until we become accustomed to it.

Modern musicians still write contrapuntal music with its interwoven melodies, and they still write music for voices, but the voice has never been better understood than it was by those composers of perfect polyphonic music in the sixteenth century. They produced music so beautiful that we can still enjoy it, and in its own style it has never been surpassed. The masses of Palestrina, Lasso, Vittoria, Byrd and other contemporary composers are still sung, and so are madrigals by many English, Flemish, and Italian composers, and the beauty of such music is unfading. As we listen to it we hear no regular time such as we hear in modern music when we count one, two, three, or one, two, three, four. In polyphonic music of this period such regular beats and rhythms do not exist. The rhythms are constantly changing, making a wonderfully smooth flowing effect, and as the voices move melodiously along and the notes melt into each other in a beautiful texture of sound, we feel the devotion and piety, the pathos and tenderness, the childlike joy and gladness the composers expressed with such art and with such charm.

All the older polyphonic musicians wrote masses, and in those days it was a common thing for the choir of every cathedral and great church in every country to collect manuscript copies of all the new and worthy music it could. It was in this way that Dunstable's music and that of his contemporaries had travelled during their lifetime to Italy and France, and it is from those countries that such music returned to us. A great deal of this music is now being discovered and published, but much of it has disappeared. During the Puritan rule in England enormous quantities of manuscript music were lost. The cathedral libraries, which were storehouses of music written in Tudor times, one of the most musical periods of history, were ruthlessly destroyed together with the organs, glass windows and other works of art hated by the reformers. The manuscripts were burnt, sold as rubbish and even shipped abroad, and comparatively little remains of the wealth that then existed.

CHAPTER VII

VIRGINALS AND LUTES

WHILE learned musicians were writing their polyphonic music for voices, changes in European life had gradually produced leisured classes of people, and, as we have seen, one of the great pleasures of their leisure was music. In the present day a musical person usually has a piano to play on, but when Queen Elizabeth lived there were no pianos. There was, however, one keyed instrument rather like a piano, but much smaller and making what we should call a little jingling sound. It was called a virginal. Educated people liked playing on it, and Queen Elizabeth was herself a good virginal player. One virginal which belonged to her can still be seen in the South Kensington Museum. But the virginal was not a popular instrument. The most widely used instrument was the lute, and it was often played with great skill. A lute is an instrument like a guitar but rather different in shape. It was played by plucking the strings with the fingers, and it made a soft pleasing sound.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century English lutenists produced some lovely music for their instrument. The most beautiful was " ayres " or tunes for voices with lute accompaniment. Some of these were for more than one voice, but it was in the ayre for single

voice that the greater number of the lutenist composers of the time excelled, and the music they produced was very tuneful, like the popular songs of the day in a beautified form. It is music of such individual charm that it is still a great possession. The simplicity and lyric beauty of the music and the lovely words it accompanies, indeed the perfection of these short songs, appeal to every one. Ayres by John Dowland, Robert Jones and Thomas Campion, to mention only a few of the best-known composers, are famous for their lovely music and equally lovely words.

Another instrument which was much in use was the viol. A viol was an early kind of violin. It did not make such a clear bright tone as the violin, and to us it sounds rather nasal like a mouth-organ, but in those days viols were considered more beautiful than the violin, which was only played by wandering musicians to accompany themselves as they sang popular songs. Every gentleman's house had a chest of viols, that is, six viols of different sizes, the smaller for playing the higher parts, and the larger ones for playing the low parts ; and guests were expected to play a part on a viol at sight. People then were very sociable and very fond of music, and when they visited their friends for a few hours it was quite usual for the viols to be taken out. Any music the host possessed was produced, and all the guests took a part at sight whether they knew the music or not. As there was no music specially written for viols, the only music they could play was the poly-

phonic music written for voices, so viol players played madrigals and similar pieces instead of singing them, and many books of madrigals have printed on them " apt for viols or voices."

It is still interesting to us to hear music played by lutes and viols, for the sounds these instruments make are unlike any we hear now. They are soft and specially suitable for playing in a small room.

One of the oldest instruments was the organ, and most wonderful improvements had been made in the organ by the time Queen Elizabeth lived. The early organs were marvellous but we should not have thought them beautiful. Each key was large enough to be thumped by the fist and it was much too heavy to be put down by a finger. Then each key when it was put down made an enormous noise. When a key is put down on the organ the air rushes into a pipe and a sound is produced. In our modern organs it is possible to play only one pipe at a time. The other pipes that might play the same note, but with different kinds of sound, are shut off by stops, as they are called. But no stops existed in the old organs. When one of the huge keys was thumped down by the fist every pipe that could make the sound of that note played and the noise was overwhelming. Besides this the blowing was very difficult, and there is a famous description of an organ in Winchester Cathedral in the tenth century which took seventy strong men to blow, and the noise was like thunder heard all over the town. However, makers

Portrait of Duiffoprugcar with various instruments
(*From a Print in the British Museum*).

gradually discovered the way to make organs more easy to play and blow, and how to bring the sound more under control; and they also paid attention to getting different kinds of sound from the pipes, with softer and more beautiful quality.

There were many famous organists in Italy, and one of the most famous was Giralomo Frescobaldi, who was born at Ferrara in 1583. He showed great imagination in his organ music, producing many new effects and music that was both interesting and suitable for his instrument. He was famous in his lifetime, and when he first played at St. Peter's in Rome 30,000 people assembled to hear him. He must have been independent in mind and sure of his own powers, new and surprising as they were to people of his time, for he wrote over one of his pieces: "Whoever can understand me let him do so; I understand myself."

It was partly during Frescobaldi's lifetime that there existed in Northern Italy the wonderful school of violin-makers whose instruments are still admired and whose methods of making violins are still copied wherever violins are made.

The earliest maker of these instruments, who has now an almost legendary fame, was a man of the family of Duiffoprugcar. He was a maker of the popular instruments of his day, lutes and viols, but he also made some of the earliest violins.

In Cremona there also lived a family called Amati making experiments in making violins, instruments rather like viols but with more powerful beautiful tone. The different members of the Amati family found out gradually what alterations would make the tone of their violins more penetrating and sweet.

It was in their workshops that there worked for some years a young man called Antonio Stradivari, some of whose violins are usually considered the best the world has ever known. His violins are still famous and fetch large sums of money, and in his lifetime kings and princes sent messengers to order violins, and one messenger stayed three months in Cremona waiting while Stradivari, then a tall, thin old man, dressed always in his white cap and white leather apron, made himself the instruments that were wanted.

Those old violin-makers learnt a great deal as they experimented, making slight differences in each instrument to try and make it more perfect than the one before. They studied the special kinds of wood that were most suitable for the different parts of the violin, sycamore or maple for the back, soft deal for the front or belly, as it is called. The deal had to be cut in December or January and dried and tempered before it could be used. One famous maker who lived near Halle, Stainer, used to go out into the woods and, holding his ear close to the trunks of the growing trees, he would knock them with his hand and listen to which gave the special resonance he wanted. This was his

way of choosing some of the wood for the instruments he loved and made so well.

Just as viols had always been made in different sizes to play different parts, so these famous violin-makers made violins of different sizes. We call the larger ones violas and violoncellos, but the largest sort of all is known as the double bass, and is really one of the old viols, not altered in shape as the other instruments of this kind are. Many of these beautiful instruments would not be known to us but for one man, Luigi Tarisio, who lived early in the nineteenth century. He was an Italian village carpenter who played the violin for village dances, and gradually his love of music and understanding of the instrument he played became the greatest thing in his life. The monasteries of Italy had many old instruments which had once been in use when such places had been homes of music, but by the time of Tarisio they had been put away and often forgotten and broken. Tarisio, travelling with a few cheap violins to sell, would stop at a monastery, make friends with the monks, exchange one of his cheap but playable instruments for the pieces of one of their old discarded ones, and in this way he collected a large number of beautiful violins, violas, and 'cellos that had been made in Cremona and other North Italian towns. In 1827 he walked to Paris with a sack containing some of the less valuable of his instruments and offered them to a well-known violin dealer, who was astonished at these treasures which no one had known existed, hidden as

they were in monasteries, often disused and broken. Tarisio continued his search for treasures of this sort, and continued to sell some of them to dealers in Paris, and it is to his passionate love for these beautiful instruments that we owe their preservation and know of their existence. He never parted with the best he found, they were too dear to him. He kept them in an attic in Milan which no one ever entered but himself, and to which he returned, ostensibly a pedlar or tramp, after his long journeys round the country. One day the people of the house, who had seen him return, noticed that he had not reappeared for some time and broke open his door. There lay Tarisio dead—the bare room crowded with violins, violas, 'cellos, some in cases, some in pieces, many of them the most wonderful instruments now known and to him so precious that no money would make him part with them. One Parisian dealer hurried to Milan when he heard of Tarisio's death and bought for a few thousand pounds these priceless treasures—violins that now live only in museums, or in collections of wealthy people or of musicians sufficiently famous to possess such expensive instruments. All these passed at one time through Tarisio's hands.

As these beautiful violins were made there began to grow up a number of violin players who composed music for the instrument they played. The first famous violin player and composer was Arcangelo Corelli (1653–1713). His music was so well adapted

to the instrument and so really interesting that it was the beginning of all the violin music we now hear. Music by some early violinists sometimes seems to us as if it had been written with the sole object of showing how brilliantly a good violinist could play. But Corelli wrote lovely melodies and used beautiful rhythms, so that his music still appeals to us. He lived in Rome in the house of a famous Cardinal named Ottoboni, and there he conducted regular concerts which were the most famous musical events in the city. Every great musician who visited Rome was welcome at the Cardinal's palace, and it was there that Handel met Corelli when he was in Rome.

While special instruments were receiving so much attention from musicians, composers first began to combine various instruments and take pleasure in hearing the mixture of different kinds of sound. We are accustomed to bands and orchestras where many different kinds of instruments play together, but in early days it was instruments of the same kind that played together. If viols or violins were used to play a piece or accompany voices, they were used all through that piece. If wind instruments were used they were used too for a whole piece. There were no sudden changes of instruments, nor were different instruments much used together.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BEGINNINGS OF OPERA

IN the early seventeenth century the best music that had been written was, as we have seen, the polyphonic music for voices. Such music expressed many inward and thoughtful feelings and also emotions of childlike joy and gaiety, but it had little to do with those more passionate feelings which make the actions of men's lives and those more dramatic emotions such as we look for in good plays. In Italy, where people learnt Greek in order to read Greek literature, a great interest arose in the Greek drama, and some of the best musicians of the time began to set these plays to music in a new way which they thought would make the feelings of the characters more vivid and moving. They did this by making a single voice declaim the poetry. The music was written not as a tune, but rising as the voice would rise and falling as it fell, in such a way that it made the voice and words sound more intense and more passionate. Such music we call "recitative," and it is the beginning of modern opera, that is, a play sung to music.

The most famous of these early composers of opera was Claudio Monteverde (1567–1643), who was viol player to the Duke of Mantua. He had been brought up to write polyphonic music like Palestrina, but had

little success in this style. He liked sudden contrasts and sounds which were then thought discordant. They were, however, just what was wanted to enhance the feeling in plays though quite out of place in unaccompanied choral music such as he wrote at first. His operas were founded on Greek stories and were most successful. The one called *Arianna*, which was produced in 1607, moved everybody who heard it to tears. Monteverde settled in Venice, and it was in Venice in 1637 that the first opera house was opened, the first place where opera was given in public and not in a private house.

Monteverde's operas were not recitative all through. Sometimes a solo voice sang ; sometimes instruments played by themselves a musical interlude ; sometimes choruses were sung, and instead of the voices being accompanied all through by viols or lutes, different instruments were used, flutes and trumpets, making new and varied sounds which all helped to make the feelings in the story more vivid and moving. Among these instruments was also a piano-like instrument called the harpsichord, about which we shall hear more later.

Numerous composers tried to imitate Monteverde and write music that was dramatic and not contemplative. One of his pupils, a German named Schütz, wrote music to sacred words, making a sacred drama. Such music we call oratorio, but the earliest short sacred dramatic pieces were called cantatas. Those written

round the story of Christ's death were called Passion music. All this music has recitatives, chorus, solo songs, and is accompanied by various instruments to make it as moving and dramatic as possible. But no one for a long time equalled Monteverde in his wonderful gift for making music express vividly and sincerely the emotions of the words and actions of the story.

The most famous composer of opera after Monteverde was Jean Baptiste Lulli (1633–1687), an Italian composer, who spent almost all his life in France. He was playing the violin in the band of Mlle. de Montpensier when the young King of France, Louis XIV, heard him and afterwards appointed him head of a special band of twenty-four violins. There was no opera then in France, but Louis XIV was very fond of entertainments called " ballets," which were plays in which people sometimes spoke, sometimes sang and sometimes danced. Such entertainments were also common in England, where they were called " masques," and Milton wrote the words for one masque, *Comus*. In France ballets were very popular at the Court, and the King himself acted in them. Lulli composed the music for dances and songs in many such entertainments, and the words of some of them were written by the great French playwright, Molière.

While Lulli was living in Paris the State opera house was opened, and he soon became its director and wrote a number of operas which are full of melodies that we can still hear with pleasure. Monteverde's music we can

very rarely hear though we should still find it moving and passionate. Lulli's music is full of tune and is grand in conception, and though we might not enjoy a whole opera we can enjoy a great deal of it in separate songs and dances.

The next famous opera composer, and one of the greatest musicians Italy has ever produced, was Alessandro Scarlatti (1658–1725). He was a very learned and gifted man, who spent a large part of his life in Naples. Naples became famous for its music, as Scarlatti's numerous operas were produced there. He showed wonderful powers of giving form and interest to his pieces. Not only did he write, in beautiful style, music suited to the voices of the singers, but he gave the music an independent interest of its own.

It was then a great advance for musicians to realize that, if music was to be interesting in itself and not only accompany words, it was not enough to start a theme or melody and then wander along vaguely, but that it was better to take parts of that theme and repeat and vary them in different ways to make the music sound as if it were all part of one idea. It was also interesting to make one phrase of the music end expectantly, as if it were waiting for another, and then make the next end in a final manner and so balance the first. It was also interesting to write a good melody, then a further part as a contrast and repeat the first melody at the end. All such devices made the music interesting and defi-

nite. It was in this way it first became possible to write long pieces without words which seemed satisfying to people's ears. We may not know what it is that carries us on to listen for one part of the music after another and makes us feel contented all the while. But it is partly the emotion which the music expresses and partly its effect of form and shape and contrast. It is to Alessandro Scarlatti's genius that we owe some of this feeling for definite shape in music.

In Alessandro Scarlatti's lifetime solo singing was the most important kind of music, and singers sang either in operas or declaimed the same kind of passionate dramatic music in short pieces written for performance in private houses and called for that reason "chamber cantatas." Singers in those days must have been very capable musicians. They all sang solos, and as the music written for them had not always much meaning of its own, a great deal of its success depended on how it was sung. A singer who could put expression and feeling into his singing created great enthusiasm and was a very important person. Italian princes and cardinals vied with each other in giving valuable presents to such singers and getting them into their service. One well-known singer called Vittori was so popular in Rome that on one occasion, when he was performing in a palace, the nobles and cardinals who had assembled to hear him were driven out by a mob of people who fought their way in to listen to their favourite, while those who could not get

in surrounded the palace trying to hear a few notes. Alessandro Scarlatti therefore had capable singers for whom to write, and the most popular part of his operas was the melodies we call arias, for solo voice.

It was customary in those days to write an instrumental prelude before each opera. We should call this the overture ; but the Italian name was " sinfonia " —symphony. These sinfonie or overtures of Alessandro Scarlatti were so interesting that they were sometimes played by themselves without the opera following, and in this way the new idea arose of having an independent piece of music for orchestra not just to introduce an opera but interesting in itself. So these compositions are the beginning of our modern symphonies. They are written for many instruments, and like our symphonies they are in several parts or movements. First they usually have a quick rather important movement, then a slow movement and a lively movement at the last. Thus Alessandro Scarlatti showed the way in which musicians afterwards combined movements into long orchestral pieces.

When Monteverde, Lulli and other musicians of that time took such an interest in music for a single voice, the interest in the old polyphonic music where many voices were equally interesting died away. Composers devoted their attention to writing good melody for one voice. The instruments they used were there to accompany that melody and make a good body of sound. The instruments played the chords, or, as we

should say, the harmony, to make a foundation of sound to support the voice. It was a new kind of music to make one part so expressive and use instruments to accompany it so that they added to the effect by the different sounds they made and the different passages they played. Alessandro Scarlatti, however, was one of the few composers who was still interested in counterpoint—that is in music written in different independent parts. As such music was no longer written for voices, he wrote his orchestral music in this style, giving each instrument a special part. He was in this way like the great composers who followed him. They too not only wrote melody and accompaniment, but when they wrote for orchestra they studied each instrument to give it an interesting part of its own. They developed a greater feeling for using each instrument in a way suited to its own particular sound ; but our modern music owes a great deal of its interest to the genius and learning of Alessandro Scarlatti.

Unfortunately many of the composers who followed him were more concerned wth the repetition of melodies and with making the shape of the piece clear than with creating melodies that were really moving and expressive. Form in music was certainly one of the discoveries that first made long instrumental pieces possible ; but it was only one of many devices that could help composers to express with greater power and interest the feelings and emotions they wished to con-

vey. Music that is written only in a good shape has no lasting interest. For just as each piece is founded on different themes and melodies, so the way those themes are used must be different in each piece, and it is only the feeling that the composer wishes to express that makes him use his themes in special ways, and convinces us who listen of the sincerity and beauty of his work.

CHAPTER IX

HARPSICHORD COMPOSERS

ALESSANDRO SCARLATTI'S son, Domenico Scarlatti (1685–1757), was also a famous composer, but of different music. He was the first composer to write with freedom for the harpsichord, a stringed instrument which may be called the precursor of the pianoforte. But the strings of the harpsichord were plucked by a quill instead of being hit by a hammer, and it made quite a different sound, the higher notes sounding like a harp, but the lower ones more jingling. Nor could the tone be varied at all except by pedals. The notes were equally loud however you played them. You just put each key down and it played its jingling sound, quite unlike the modern piano where all depends on *how* you put the key down. For on the modern piano you can play each note soft or loud, singing or muffled, or indeed in many different ways, but all this was not possible on the harpsichord.

There was yet another keyboard instrument in use at this time called the clavichord. It was so soft it could only be heard across a room, but you could play with expression on it since it was possible to alter the tone a little from soft to loud according to your pressure on the keys, for the clavichord had a different kind of action from that of the harpsichord. When one of its

keys was depressed, a brass upright, called a tangent, pushed up against the string to make it sound. These three ways of making the string vibrate make, of course, very different sounds. The plucked strings of the harpsichord[1] sound jingling, the pushed strings of the clavichord very quiet but sweet, while the struck strings of the piano have an infinite variety of sounds according to the skill of the player who makes the hammer hit the string suddenly or slowly, hardly or softly, or in the many ways that a skilful player uses instinctively as he produces his varied notes, ways which it would be impossible to describe.

Domenico Scarlatti composed large numbers of pieces for the harpsichord, and we now hear them played on the piano. Many of the effects of modern piano music were originated by him. He wrote for crossed hands, and passages of quick light notes, and notes so quick and far apart that the hand has to fly to them. In fact, his pieces required what we should call a real technique of piano playing, those special ways of playing notes that are effective on the instrument and

[1] It is sometimes a little confusing to understand the many names that are given to old instruments of this kind. These various names usually apply to the quill-plucked instrument which was made in different shapes and had different names according to its shape. When its form was that of our grand piano (called trapeze shape), the instrument was called a harpsichord, but also clavicembalo, clavecin, flügel, or spinet. There was also a kind of harpsichord upright in shape something like our upright piano, and it was called a clavicytherium. There was a similar instrument of oblong shape, like a table. This was always called a spinet.

need special practice. His music is still difficult to play, but it is always a pleasure to hear. It is so delicate and clear.

One other composer was famous for the music he wrote for the harpsichord, and also for his harpsichord playing, the French organist, François Couperin, who was born fifteen years before Domenico Scarlatti.

When Couperin lived music for the harpsichord depended for its interest on being tuneful, rhythmic like a dance, and having "ornaments." These ornaments are groups of short notes which are played quickly just before the note they ornament. As the tone of the harpsichord did not last after the note was struck, any long note was usually alternated with the note next above or below it so as to continue the sound. This made a group of quick notes in place of one long one. Such groups of notes made beautiful effects. Couperin's music is full of them. He wrote little dance tunes such as Lulli would have written for ballets, and his plan was to combine several short dances together by playing them one after the other. The separate pieces following each other made thus one long piece of music called a "suite." It was thus that the first long pieces of music for harpsichord came into existence. Couperin gave names to all his little dances, and the music still sounds dainty and pleasing when played on the piano.

That composers should write numbers of dance tunes and find an interest in arranging them to contrast well with each other in suites is not surprising when we

consider how much dancing was practised at that time. Now when a great interest is taken in folk-dancing we see a good deal of such dancing and realize the number of dances that have been collected. Quite unlike our modern ballroom dancing, where a few dances are all that are used, anyone who dances folk-dances has numbers of different dances in which he can join.

In the days of early writers of suites—Couperin, Scarlatti, Purcell and others—people danced numbers of dances, travelling musicians and soldiers home from foreign wars brought with them some knowledge of the dances of other countries, and though the poorer people might only dance the folk-dances peculiar to their own country, the cultivated classes learned dances of every country, and at Court balls all sorts of dances from different nations were popular. Some were courtly, stately dances, some more lively, and to write music for such different movements must have been fascinating.

No one now dances a pavane, but the stately measured steps with the lovely dress of the time must have made of that dance a beautiful picture, and that stateliness and vision is embodied in some of the short pieces written as pavanes. Very few people still dance a jig, but every one has some idea that it is a light, gay, quick, jumping dance, and the short movements in suites, called " gigue," are quick and rhythmic and convey this light, elastic spirit of movement.

So in playing the old suites (which in France were called " ordres " and in Germany " partitas "), it is

interesting not only to hear the beauty of the music but to gather something of the movements the composers must have had in mind as they wrote. Many of the dances to which they wrote have quite dropped out of use, and about some of them nothing is known. Some, like the jig and minuet, are still well known, and each has a special character and rhythm which lends its charm to the music.

The Guitar Player
From an early Print (*c.* 1510) by Marcantonio Raimondi.
(*In the British Museum*).

CHAPTER X

PURCELL

WHILE Italy had so many composers beginning to produce the kinds of music we are accustomed to now, England had none. It was the time of Puritan rule, and music, together with all other art, was regarded with suspicion.

Nevertheless, the English people still loved music, and though in churches all music was stopped under the Commonwealth, there was plenty of music outside. Oliver Cromwell was himself very fond of music. He instituted the first public concerts, which were given in Whitehall, and he permitted the opening of the first English opera house. John Milton, the poet, was a musician, and John Bunyan, the author of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, was so fond of music that when he was imprisoned in Bedford jail he made himself a flute out of the leg of a chair and was able to enjoy the music he made without his jailer ever discovering where his instrument was.

But English music did not become famous again until after the return of the Royalists. Charles II had been brought up in France, and he liked Lulli's light melodious music and dancing rhythmic tunes. When he returned to England and started music in church again he found the music used was the old

polyphonic music which had no marked rhythm, and such music he thought dull. So he sent one of the members of the Chapel Royal, Pelham Humphreys, to study the new kinds of music on the continent of Europe. Humphreys studied with Lulli in Paris, and when he returned he wrote many anthems and songs. He was made Director of the Chapel Royal, and deserves special notice because he was the teacher of the greatest musical genius England has ever possessed, Henry Purcell.

Henry Purcell was born in 1658 in Westminster, in the year that Cromwell died, and he passed the whole of his short life (till 1695) in the service of Westminster Abbey. There he was a member of the Chapel Royal, and there he became organist when the famous Dr. Blow resigned in favour of his young pupil. There also he sang at the coronation of James II, and played at the coronation of William and Mary. His children are buried in the Abbey cloisters and he himself lies beneath the organ. At the time he lived no other musician in the world had such genius or could write such original and imaginative music. He admired the Italian composers, the beautiful shape of their music, and the sense of style they showed in their writing, and he liked the dignity of their music, but not content with learning all he could from them, he added in his own compositions a warmth of feeling and expression unknown before. His songs are full of melody. Sometimes music of his time sounds

as if the melodies had a family likeness ; but this is never so in Purcell's music. Each one has character and expression of its own, and the harmonies with which he accompanied his melodies are vivid and varied. He wrote a great deal of operatic music. The most famous of his operas is *Dido and Æneas*, which was written to music throughout.

Purcell also wrote for violins and harpsichord combined. This music for a few solo instruments playing together we call " chamber music." It has always had a great appeal for musicians, and some of the most perfect music ever written has been written in this style.

In 1694 Queen Mary died, and her funeral took place in the Abbey in great state, the Lords following in gold and ermine, the Commons in long black cloaks. Banners were carried in front of the purple and gold coffin, and the whole of the Abbey was lighted with numbers of wax-lights. Purcell wrote the music for the service, two anthems which were said to be " rapturously fine, solemn and heavenly in operation, and which drew tears from all." One of these anthems, " Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts," has been sung at every choral funeral in Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral ever since, and its music is considered so beautiful that when a later musician, Dr. Croft, set the burial service to music, he wrote none for those words, because he felt it had been done perfectly by Purcell and no one could do it so well again.

Not many months after Queen Mary's funeral Purcell himself died at his house in Dean's Yard, and the same anthems were sung over his grave.

Purcell's music still lives. It is full of imagination and sensitive expression, full of melody, very personal and very sincere. No one has ever written quite as he did. He had no followers in his own country and musicians of other countries had not his environment or his peculiar gifts. He combined the new style he had learnt from Pelham Humphreys and the Italians with the old polyphonic style which he had heard in his youth. That is to say, he wrote sometimes in counterpoint, but he used instruments to accompany voices, playing distinct music of their own, and he had solos and all sorts of moving passages and rhythms which had never existed in the old style of music. To this he added his own sincere feeling and showed genius in expressing it.

CHAPTER XI

BACH AND HANDEL

IN 1685, ten years before Purcell died, Johann Sebastian Bach was born at Eisenach in Germany. Every great musician since Bach lived reveres his name and has found inspiration in his music. No musician since he lived has been too great to learn from Bach. His music is not always easy to listen to or to understand, particularly at a first hearing, but it is so full of meaning that the more we hear his works the more beauties we find in them, and the more we feel we are experiencing new emotions and new thoughts.

Johann Sebastian Bach was one of a large family of the same name, famous for their music for over a hundred years. He had uncles and cousins who were well-known musicians, and his father was a violinist and a town musician. In those days every German town had a band of trained musicians, so that the young Bach heard much instrumental music. He learnt from his father to play the violin, but when he was ten years old his parents died, and he went to live with an older brother, and entered a school where he became well known for his beautiful boy's voice. Schoolboys in those days used to sing regularly not only in school but in the streets, in front of people's houses, and in this way Bach learnt a great deal of vocal music.

It is said that so anxious was he to learn all he could that he would sit up on moonlight nights copying from a book of organ music which his brother possessed but would not allow him to use.

After he left his brother's house he supported himself by his singing. He went long journeys on foot to Hamburg to hear Reinken the organist play. He had to save up money to provide enough food for these journeys, and once when he was on his way home, very hungry and with no food or money, he sat down outside an inn for a rest, when a window opened and two herrings' heads were thrown out. Bach picked them up and found in each a piece of gold. Full of joy at this gift, he at once abandoned his homeward way and went back to Hamburg, where he was able to listen again to the organ music he was so devoted to.

In other countries it had not been the custom for the congregation to join in the singing in church, but in Germany the people had always been great hymn-singers, and when Luther reformed the service he, being devoted to music, collected the old German Hymns and adapted and arranged good tunes from many sources to fit them. These " chorales," as they were called, became a regular part of the Protestant service, and a great inspiration to German musicians. They used the tunes to make pieces for the organ, adding other parts on the instrument in counterpoint just as old writers of polyphonic music had written parts for voices. Luther once wrote a preface to a

musical book and gave a beautiful description of such music. He said, "When natural music is heightened and polished by art, then man first beholds and can with great wonder examine to a certain extent (for it cannot be wholly seized or understood) the great and perfect wisdom of God in His marvellous work of music, in which this is most singular and indeed astonishing, that one man sings a simple tune, or tenor, as musicians call it, together with which three, four or five voices also sing which as it were play and skip delightedly round this simple tune or tenor and wonderfully grace and adorn the said tune with manifold devices and sounds, performing as it were a heavenly dance so that those who at all understand it and are moved by it must be greatly amazed and believe that there is nothing more extraordinary in the world than such a song adorned with many voices." This description of the old polyphonic music for voices is equally apt for the contrapuntal music musicians now wrote round chorale tunes, only the music, being for instruments, was more free and could move about more.

These pieces written on the hymn or chorale tunes were called chorale preludes or fantasias, and the ones written by Bach are some of the most intimate and lovely of his compositions. The greatest works, however, that he wrote for the organ, were fugues, pieces written for several parts, or "voices," as they are often called. Each "voice" plays or sings the special short phrase or melody which is the "subject" of the

fugue. One " voice " starts alone and sings the subject, then another voice begins to sing the same subject, while the first voice accompanies ; then the third voice enters and sings the subject while the two first voices accompany, and the same continues until as many voices are singing as the particular fugue is written for. The subject keeps occurring frequently through the piece, sometimes in one part, sometimes another, sometimes in different keys and always with the other voices weaving different melodies (or counterpoints) round it, and at times making wonderful passages of music without the subject, as a contrast to it. Fugues were usually full of clever tricks and devices. The subject was made to combine with itself in different parts, starting a few notes later, or written in notes of greater or shorter length, and the counterpoints were so cleverly written that they could be used above or below the subject. Such complexities were very difficult to achieve in a smooth and musical manner, but the wonder about Bach's fugues is that though he shows in some of them that he can do all these skilful devices with great ease, it is not this skill that is the interest of his music.

To the ordinary musician it was enough to write a fugue as an exercise to show his cleverness in managing notes ; but for Bach composition was so much a part of his nature that he wrote to express all sorts of different emotions, and each of his fugues is a perfect piece of music. Almost all great musicians have

written fugues, but no one has ever written them as Bach did, with such mastery, such feeling and in such numbers. His organ fugues are some of the most perfect music that has ever been written for the organ, and modern organists still play them as the most important works for their instrument.

Toccatas are another kind of piece which Bach often wrote for the organ; these are pieces which contain many different effects, sometimes brilliant, sometimes quiet, all showing off the powers of the instrument. Toccatas were sometimes very showy pieces, but in Bach's hands, though he made most brilliant ones, they are full of music and sometimes, after wonderfully brilliant passages making sounds and rhythms such as he alone knew how to create, there will come a soft, tender passage, all the more beautiful for the contrast with what has gone before.

For the harpsichord and clavichord Bach wrote pieces such as fugues and toccatas, also two beautiful sets of preludes and fugues called the "well-tempered clavier."

Pianos had just been invented when Bach lived and he played on some at various times, but though he admired the tone he objected to the heavy action of the notes and remained always faithful to the quiet, gentle sounds of the clavichord.

The famous "well-tempered clavier" consists of forty-eight preludes and fugues which are still some of the most beautiful piano music in the world (for they are played on the piano, as clavichords are now

seldom used). They show us one more interesting thing about Bach, which was that he realized that the way notes were usually tuned in his time was not the way that would then best help the advancement of music. In Bach's day keyed instruments like organs and harpsichords had their notes absolutely in tune, that is to say, the notes of a few scales were tuned to exact proportions of the key or fundamental note. But this meant that music written in any other keys than the two or three usually used was dreadfully out of tune. The notes were so perfectly tuned for the few keys that they could not relate themselves to more distant keys, and though some good musicians could not restrict themselves to the few usual keys but insisted on being free to use more strange and unusual keys, the noise produced must have been beautiful only in their imagination, for the notes used were most discordant to the ordinary ear.

However, it had been shown that it was possible to alter the tuning of keys in such a way that every key or scale was equally in tune, and Bach's preludes and fugues were all written for this novel system of tuning, and in every different key. For it was not only composition that interested Bach. His mind worked on everything connected with music. He made, for instance, a great change in playing by using the thumb. This had hardly ever been done before, and the way we now play our pianos and organs, using all our fingers and thumbs, is due to Bach's innovation.

As time went on, Bach held appointments not only as organist but as director of music, and wherever he was he wrote music according to his opportunities. Frederick the Great admired him sincerely, and often tried to get Bach to visit him. Bach, however, liked a regular life, and would not go for a long time, but when at last he did arrive and the news was brought to Frederick his excitement was so great that he had the famous musician brought to him at once, without even allowing him time to change his clothes. When he was organist he wrote pieces for the organ and cantatas for voices. These were works more like our modern anthems, with solos and chorus and usually accompanied by instruments such as violins, oboes, etc. When he was director of music at Cöthen and had the opportunity of hearing violin and other instrumental music, he wrote his famous *suites* for violin and 'cello which are still the greatest music for those instruments, and also his beautiful concertos, still some of the most lovely music for orchestra we possess, though unlike modern orchestral music. These concertos are what we should call symphonies, that is, they are pieces for an orchestra of different instruments playing together —strings (that is violins, violas, 'cellos and double basses), wind (such as flutes, oboes, trumpets), and piano (or cembalo, as the harpsichord then used was called). By concerto we now mean a piece with a solo instrument and orchestral accompaniment, and some of Bach's famous concertos have several solo

instruments as well as orchestral accompaniment, and so are properly to be called concertos. Whereas in modern concertos the solo instrument sounds prominent against the orchestral accompaniment, in Bach's concertos each solo instrument is only part of the beautiful counterpoint, and the contrast lies not in one instrument against the orchestra, but in the large group of instruments that plays the orchestral part and the few that play the solo part.

The last appointment Bach held was that of Cantor at the Thomas Schule in Leipzig. Here he had to teach the boys and to compose and play and direct, and in Leipzig he spent the last twenty-seven years of his life. Here he wrote much more church music, his famous B minor Mass, and one of his greatest works, the Matthew Passion, that is a setting to music of the story of the Passion from the Gospel of St. Matthew. Other great composers had written such settings, but Bach's is always considered the most perfect. To people unaccustomed to Bach's music it is not always easy to listen to at first, for the contrapuntal melodies are not obviously tuneful, and the music is not always direct and simple but rather reflecting the mood of resignation or joy of the singer. And the voice parts are not necessarily easy and smooth for the voice ; they are rather like a voice singing in the manner of an instrument, making part of the weaving counterpoint. All these things seem at first strange ; the beauties are so delicate, so easily

lost upon us, but every one enjoys the old German hymn tunes, the chorales, which are scattered through the work, with the magic harmonies Bach has given them, combinations of sounds so unexpected, so stirring, that even now they seem new and surprisingly beautiful, while in Bach's day the consistory of one town actually complained that his harmonies were too strange and ought to be more simple.

One other quality in Bach's music which every one enjoys is his wonderful rhythm. Bach in some ways brought instrumental music to perfection, and one great force in instrumental music is rhythm. When we hear one of his great fugues, the insistent rhythm and the gradually piled-up sound of part upon part seem to build up the sound as if it were a piece of architecture. It is his rhythms which give Bach's works such wonderful force and vitality.

There is so much of Bach's music that it is difficult for any one person to know it all unless after years of study. Musical instruments were not all very perfect in Bach's day, but for those that were, the organ, the violin and the clavier, he wrote the most perfect music of a contrapuntal kind that has ever been written. Long pieces for instruments were unknown except in the form of *suites*, that is, different dances played one after the other. But Bach wrote several long works which were models of what could be done. One of the most famous of these is called the " Italian concerto," a work for the clavier in three movements,

the first rhythmic and lively, the second slow and very beautiful, and the last quick and light. Another long work he wrote for the clavier—the Goldberg variations, as they are called—was a wonderful set of variations on a theme, some very learned and some poetical and mysteriously beautiful. Bach also wrote beautiful suites. Some of the most beautiful are those now called the French suites, which were written in a little book of pieces he composed for his second wife. All his married life was very happy, and his second wife seems to have shared all his music. She sang and he taught her to play and she helped him copy his compositions, for in those days engraving music was very expensive and very little of Bach's work was published in his lifetime ; most of it exists in copies made by himself, his wife, his children, and his pupils. Bach engraved some of his works himself.

Scarlatti and other composers had shown how to give instrumental music a shape by using a melody and repeating it, and Bach developed such ideas, but sometimes he used a little figure or group of notes all through a piece to give it unity, sometimes he changed half-way through the piece to a different key and then back again to end in the original key. Such a proceeding was very modern in his day, and it was only fully developed and used by much later composers ; but this form is in some of Bach's works and he evidently understood many ways of giving shape and form to his pieces. We feel as we hear his music

J. S. Bach

that it is inevitable in its feeling and that the feeling underlying the sound makes the shape of the piece. Such shape was only possible with a man of such sincerity and force as Bach. An ordinary composer's music written in such a way would have seemed vague and meandering, but with Bach it seems like hearing one beauty lead to another, or as if a spirit were talking and revealing itself to us, so certain is it and so full of meaning.

One special form of composition is connected with the name of Bach, and Purcell and other composers also wrote beautiful examples of it, and that is a piece written on what is called a "ground bass." This means that the same short passage or melody is used in the bass over and over again throughout the composition. It has proved to be a form that can underlie most moving impressive music. Bach's *Chaconne* is a famous example of it.

It is always thought that Bach himself loved best the music that he wove round the chorale tunes, for he was making a collection of his chorale fantaisies, his most personal and lovable music, when his last illness came.

Bach's long happy life came to an end in 1750. His eyes had probably suffered from his moonlight copying when a boy, for they were often troublesome, and at last he had an operation which was unfortunately useless. It left him blind and for the first time in his life he felt ill and suffering. For some months

he continued his work and dictated to his son-in-law a beautiful piece, fancy or fantaisie as it is called, on a chorale melody, "*Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sind.*" It was his last work.

Though Bach in his lifetime was revered as a wonderful performer on organ and clavier, and a wonderfully learned musician, it was not until many years later that his greatness as a composer was recognized. At last, early in the nineteenth century, his fame began with a better knowledge of his work. Mozart read everything he could by Bach, Beethoven called the forty-eight preludes his musical Bible. Mendelssohn, Goethe, Schumann, all found in Bach inexhaustible beauties, and at last a society was founded called the Bach Gesellschaft to publish all that could be discovered of his work. A great deal had been lost, but all that was left was carefully collected and published by this society in forty-six large volumes, the famous Bach Gesellschaft edition.

While Bach was living his quiet regular life, unconscious of much of his greatness, another great musician lived and worked in a very different way —Georg Friedrich Handel. Handel (1685–1759) is especially well known to English people, for he lived a large part of his life in England and became a naturalised Englishman. His best-known oratorio, *The Messiah*, is like a national possession so often do we hear it sung.

But though Handel is best known because of his oratorios, they were only written at the end of his life, and the music which made him famous was almost all operas. These he poured out one after another. He would write one in a fortnight just in time to produce it, and then be hard at work on another ; and all the time he paid visits, played at concerts and in private houses, travelled to collect singers to perform his work, and in fact did more than most men could have even attempted. Perhaps one of the things English people like most to remember about him, after his music, was his interest in the children of the Foundling Hospital. He gave a concert to raise money to finish the chapel there. He gave the organ to the chapel when it was finished, and every year after 1750 he gave a performance of *The Messiah* for the benefit of the hospital, and in this way helped it with thousands of pounds. Though blind for the last years of his life, he continued to direct these performances as usual, and on April 6th, 1759, made his last public appearance in this way. After the performance he felt very ill, and he died a few days later.

Handel was born at Halle, where his father, an old man, was a barber-surgeon. The father much disliked his son's feeling for music and opposed it in every possible way, but Handel managed to learn to play, and when he was seven years old he went with his father to the Court of the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels. The Duke heard him play the organ and per-

suaded his father to let him have a musical education. For many years all his spare time was given to music, and he became celebrated for his organ playing and was made organist at the cathedral. But when he was eighteen and his father had been dead for some years, he gave up his work in Halle and went to Hamburg.

Hamburg was a great musical centre in those days, for it was there that German opera was being produced. At this time practically all opera was Italian. Operas were written in the Italian manner to Italian words and sung by Italian singers. But just as Lulli had produced operas which were French in style (that is, less finished for the voice but more dramatic and containing dances and rhythmic tunes which did not occur in Italian operas), so now a composer called Keiser was producing German operas in Hamburg. These operas were founded on simple stories, and anyone interested in the development of opera naturally went to Hamburg. Handel went, therefore, to this famous musical centre and managed to obtain an appointment as violinist in the opera house.

In those days the most important instrument in an opera orchestra was the harpsichord, and the performer who played the harpsichord also acted as the conductor. While playing, he led the other instruments, and he also had to play the accompaniments for recitatives and some other parts of the opera. Fortunately for Handel, the conductor was away on one occasion,

and he had the opportunity to take his place. This led to his becoming known, and the operas he wrote were produced and made quite a success.

It was not long after this that he went to Italy, where he had always longed to go, and there he made friends with all the great musicians of the day. He became the lifelong friend of Domenico Scarlatti ; he met his father Alessandro Scarlatti and he knew Corelli the violinist well. The only great musician of the day whom he never met was Bach. Three times Bach made special efforts to see Handel, but they were never successful. Once Bach went to Halle, but arrived a day too late. Once he sent his son, but all in vain.

Handel's visit to Italy was like a triumphal tour. In Florence, after producing an opera, the Duke entertained him at his palace. In Venice the theatre was filled for every performance of his work, the audience shouting for the " Saxon," as he was called. In Rome and Naples he stayed and wrote works which were produced with great success.

This time in Italy had a wonderful effect on him. While he studied in Hamburg he had learnt to write good counterpoint, and he had always had a wonderful gift for melody, but in Italy he learnt to write with added grace his beautiful flowing melodies for single voices, tuneful effective music. When we think of Handel we hardly realize the perfect counterpoint of his famous choruses ; what we all remember are his wonderful melodies.

At last, in 1710, he came to London and began that series of operas which we hardly ever hear but which contain tunes we all know, the *Largo*, the *March in Scipio*, which is still played by the Grenadier Guards, and many other famous marches and arias. Such dramatic melodious works as he produced had never been heard or imagined before, and his success was tremendous.

He lived for some time at Burlington House, Piccadilly, and for two years at Cannons, a large country house near Edgware belonging to the Duke of Chandos. There he wrote his well-known suites for harpsichord, some of his best-known anthems and two masques—one *Acis and Galatea*, the other *Haman and Mordecai*. The second masque was really the Bible story of Esther set to music and acted with scenery and costumes. Some years later Handel proposed giving a public performance of this work, but there was a great outcry against a Bible story being acted, and the Bishop of London forbade the performance. Handel therefore produced this sacred play, lengthened and altered, but without any acting or scenery, and his audience was delighted. This was the first of Handel's oratorios, those great works which brought him even wider and more lasting fame than his operas had done.

Handel worked very hard composing operas and controlling the various great singers who sang in them, settling their differences, rehearsing their songs and

conducting performances. It was no easy task to control the singers. Each was an important person determined to have his or her full share of applause and jealous of the others. Quarrels between them were frequent and had to be settled or the performance would have been ruined. Fashionable people courted them, applauded their favourites, paid large sums for seats to hear them and even copied their dresses, and if any difficulty between the singers became public it was at once intensified by the applause of their friends and the hisses of those who supported a rival. So there were constant difficulties to contend with. At one time there was a rival composer, Buononcini, whose supporters did their best to ruin Handel. At another time rival entertainments stole his songs and even whole works. But he composed untiringly. He was a man of enormous physical strength, but it did not prevent his breaking down at last under the constant strain and excessive work. For twenty-six years he had produced operas as well as writing anthems and music for many festive occasions. The sums of money he made at first he lost at last. It seemed as if his successes were over and his health impaired. He became partially paralysed and had for a time to rest completely, and after this he wrote no more for the stage. Still he did not give in, but devoted himself as soon as he could to writing oratorios. The few he had written were very popular and drew large audiences. Just as at first the King and royal family

attended his operas and Society people fought their way into the crowded theatre where they were produced, and paid large sums for a seat, so now they flocked to hear his oratorios. These oratorios had the special beauty of long and wonderful choruses. Such choruses were not possible in operas, which consisted mostly of airs and recitatives, but they were a great addition in Handel's oratorios. *The Messiah*, which is his best-known oratorio, was produced first in Dublin, and when it was given in London, the Hallelujah chorus so excited the audience, among whom was the King, that the people sprang to their feet and stood until it ended.

Handel wrote his works with extraordinary speed. *The Messiah* was written in twenty-four days and some of his operas in less time than that. He was one of the greatest masters of choral writing that ever lived, and some people find his the most beautiful music that ever has been written. The music of his operas is not like the music some composers write, communing as it were with themselves. It has other beauties and at times magnificent effects of sound. Handel devoted all his amazing powers to writing worthy and beautiful music, so really effective that, as Mozart said of him, " He can strike like a hammer when he chooses."

Though Handel's fame rests on his operas and oratorios he wrote as well a good deal of instrumental music, much of it very beautiful. His suites for piano

and his violin and piano sonatas are lovely, and his works for organ and for the orchestra of his day show a richness and vigour most suitable to the instruments for which he writes and expressive of the force and power that underlay his character.

His operas, though they are now hardly known, contain an enormous amount of lovely music, and they and his instrumental music deserve to be far better known than they are. Here is music that every one could enjoy, and which is full of varied beauty.

One other composer of this time has a special fame among English people, that is Dr. Thomas Arne (1710–1778). His song "*Rule, Britannia,*" which is a national possession, he wrote at the end of a masque. Arne wrote the music to several masques and incidental music to some of Shakespeare's plays, and some of his settings of Shakespeare's songs are still famous. Every one knows "*Where the bee sucks,*" and many people who have seen *As You Like It* have listened to Arne's music being sung to "*Under the greenwood tree*" and "*Blow, blow, thou winter wind.*"

Arne was born near Covent Garden and was at school at Eton. He had no wish to enter the profession chosen for him by his father and he managed to have a spinet carried secretly to his room. This he muffled, and on it he practised. He also learnt to play the violin, and when leading the orchestra at a private house was recognized by his father. But no

persuasion would make him give up music and his wish to pursue this art as a career was justified, for his lovely graceful melodies soon made him famous. He wrote catches, glees, operas, oratorios, songs and instrumental music, and he was engaged as composer at Drury Lane Theatre and at the popular Vauxhall Gardens and Ranelagh, and there still exist a large number of songs written by him for these open-air performances. Some of his instrumental music has great grace and charm, but it is by his songs that Arne will always be specially remembered.

Arne wrote several "glees" which are a kind of composition peculiar to England. Madrigal singing, which had been so loved by English people, had died out about a hundred years before Arne was born, when music written in modes (not the usual modern scales) had died out. But the English love of part-singing revived in a new form. Glees were compositions written for several solo voices, often only for men. Arne only wrote a few glees and they were not his most important work: the best glees were written by other composers later, when the singing of glees was very popular and clubs were formed where men could meet and join in this favourite pastime.

The Catch Club was one of these reunions. It was formed in 1761 and was for singing glees as well as catches and rounds. Singing in canon, as it is called, was not part of a glee. Glees were longer, freer compositions, and very varied in character.

The Glee Club was another reunion of this kind, started in 1783, and it became so well known for the excellence of its singing that important musicians who visited London sometimes attended its meetings. One of such visitors was Mendelssohn. The glees at these meetings were usually sung first by solo voices and then by a body of voices for each part, thus allowing all the members to join in.

CHAPTER XII

THE FATHER OF MODERN MUSIC

WHEN Bach died he had written the most perfect contrapuntal music that the world has ever heard. But new ways of writing music were being used which did not depend so entirely on counterpoint, and later on, even if musicians did use counterpoint and its imitations, they used other ways as well of making music. Some of these new ways had been used in popular songs and dances, but not in the learned and artistic music.

Music is not like other arts, where the means remain the same at different periods. For instance in sculpture at any period of the world's history if people have understood how to carve in stone they have been able to express their spirit in sculpture. But in music it is different. Each age and each people has had different means with which to make music, different instruments, different scales, different ways of using notes. So at one time there may be a perfect music made with certain means, and at another time an equally perfect music made with quite other means. We have seen that in Queen Elizabeth's days, before instruments were well understood and before the old modes had narrowed to the two scales we now use, composers had written perfect contrapuntal music for voices. Later,

Bach had written a new kind of beautiful contrapuntal music for instruments ; and for the instruments that were understood in his day, the organ, clavichord, and string instruments like the violin and 'cello, he wrote music that has never been equalled. After Bach composers began to discover interests of harmony and key that had hardly been understood in his day.

The violin composers, who were now developing the technique of their instrument and finding out gradually how to play it with all the effects we hear to-day, made the violin a solo instrument. Any instrument played with it was simply an accompaniment. So when composers wrote a melody or theme they made it very tuneful or very rhythmic and very definitely in one key. A melody that was not used to combine with other melodies or with bits of itself could be much more free, more in the nature of what we should call a tune, than a contrapuntal melody was. So a new simple kind of melody began to be used. Another interest was the beautiful tone and the special powers of expression which could be developed from each instrument. Different qualities of tone had not mattered so much when parts answering each other and imitating each other provided constant contrasts, but when one instrument was used alone the different kinds of sound it could make, and their beauty, and all the effects that could be produced by playing loud or soft—all this became important and added fresh delights. When a piece consisted of the short, not very free melodies,

that are suitable to counterpoint, it could not last very long without a feeling that the themes were being used to weariness. But when a piece contained several different tunes and the interest of passing from one key to another and then the expectancy of the tune coming back to the original key, it is clear that a new departure had been made in the writing of music. And so it became possible for long instrumental works to be written without their seeming long or dull.

As a result of these developments, composers made a new form or shape for pieces of instrumental music. They would begin a piece with a tuneful or vigorous theme in one key, then move to another key which made a good contrast to the first, and in this second key there would be a new theme, or more than one, all giving a definite impression of this new fresh key. Then would come passages of what is called " modulation," that is, the movement from one key to another. But at last the music would come back to the first key, and then the various themes were all repeated to make that key final and definite. This shape of a piece of music depends on the harmony, the chords that are used to make the original key sound definite and to make the new keys sound like a surprise or freshness, and finally to make our ears feel the completeness of the return to the first key at the end of the piece. Such music is called harmonic music, and the special form of it just described is known as " sonata form." It was used for long pieces for the clavier or piano and also for other

instruments, such pieces as violin sonatas and string quartets, also in the compositions for orchestra which we call symphonies. Musicians still used dances and the shorter forms such as A. Scarlatti had used in his arias and Bach in his instrumental suites, but they wrote long important movements in this new way.

It must be remembered that Bach and his contemporaries had not written any music for orchestra as we understand it. For although he had written the Brandenburg concertos, which are beautifully adapted for different instruments playing together, this was purely contrapuntal music and therefore different in its effect from modern orchestral music. In Bach's music the separateness and distinctness of each instrument matters, whereas in modern orchestral music the way the different instruments combine together to make new blendings of sound is the thing of greatest importance. So much has been done since Bach lived to develop the resources of some instruments, or, as we should say, to improve their technique, that many effects are possible which in Bach's day would have been impossible because no player could have been found who could play them.

The first great musician who is always remembered for writing symphonies, those long works for many instruments which we now hear, was Haydn, and he is also remembered as the first musician to write string quartets as we understand them now, that is, works written in several movements for four solo string instruments, first violin, second violin, viola and 'cello.

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809) came from a very musical nation, the Croatians. He was born in a little Austrian village not far from the Danube. His father, who was a wheelwright, was very fond of the harp, and in the evenings he sat at his door playing and singing with his wife and children the many popular songs of the countryside. Haydn never forgot those songs. Their tunes and rhythms are often found in the beautiful music he wrote in later life. In the old contrapuntal music the tunes of popular folk-songs or hymn tunes or dances were only used as a basis for all sorts of flowing contrapuntal melodies. But music was changing now, and real tunes, real peasant songs and dances were written in serious long works and made the spirit and gaiety of a movement.

Little Haydn was only six years old when a relative took him away from home and sent him to a school where he learnt to be a good singer and to play a little on various instruments. He got on so well that he was offered a place as choir-boy in Vienna. His education and singing went on in the choir school, but he was not taught to write music at all. However, he was always composing, and when his voice broke and he was turned out of the choir with no money and no prospects he took pupils and worked still harder at composing and studying music by other composers. One composer whose works he especially studied was Philip Emanuel Bach, a son of the famous Johann Sebastian Bach, and it was in his sonatas for clavier that Haydn

learned the new form or shape for music that he used in writing symphonies.

As he made more friends and became better known, he was asked to a country house where there was an orchestra, and here he wrote his first pieces for orchestra. Orchestral pieces in those days were not always long important works, many were short light pieces written for the daily concerts that took place in noblemen's houses, and they were called by many different names—symphony, serenade, notturno, cassation, divertimento. Many noblemen had private bands or orchestras and much music was written for them. Haydn's lonely studies had helped him to be really original. His works were full of gaiety and freshness and melody, and his best work was far more interesting and alive than the other music of his time. He was twenty-eight years old when Prince Anton Esterhazy, who lived at Eisenstadt in Hungary, appointed him to direct his private orchestra. It was quite small, but the players were good, and for thirty years Haydn lived with the Prince.

It was a very regular quiet life passed in the country. Every morning and afternoon Haydn composed. He never began without being carefully dressed, and later in life if he felt he was going to write something specially important and beautiful he put on as well the ring which the King of Prussia had given him. Then every day there were concerts of music when Haydn and all the other musicians had to wear the uniform of the

Prince, and there was regular music in church and sometimes operas were performed. All the other musicians Haydn regarded as his family ; they called him Papa Haydn, they looked to him to do all he could for them with the Prince and they were united in their affection for him.

This quiet life was only disturbed when important visitors came and special musical performances were arranged to welcome them, or when once in the year the Prince went to Vienna. It was during this quiet life that Haydn wrote an immense amount of music, and his work was so original that though Prince Esterhazy and many musicians of the day appreciated its beauty, the Emperor Joseph and other people who were accustomed to the light pleasant melodies of Italian operas did not want anything new and found Haydn's music too original.

During the yearly visit to Vienna Haydn met Mozart and made a lifelong friendship. Many musicians were jealous of each other and anxious to outshine each other, but feelings of this sort were impossible to Haydn and Mozart. To them music was the all-important thing and each saw the other's genius. Though Haydn was twenty-four years older than Mozart, he only began to write his symphonies a few years earlier than Mozart, and his best work was written after he had known Mozart for years and studied his work. And Mozart said that it was from Haydn that he learnt how to write string quartets. Haydn was never tired of praising Mozart and never spoke of him without feeling. When

Music Party on a Terrace.

By Joseph Francis Nollekens. Early Eighteenth Century.
(By permission of Captain E. J. Spencer Churchill).

as an old man Haydn went to England, Mozart went to see him off, and spent the last few hours in his company.

Haydn was nearly sixty when his duties with the Esterhazy family ceased. Salomon, a famous violinist and conductor who lived in London and had often produced symphonies by Haydn and Mozart at his concerts, had long tried to get Haydn to visit England. When he heard that the death of Prince Esterhazy had released Haydn from his appointment, he hurried to Vienna and brought Haydn back to London with him. Haydn lived most of the time of his visit in Lisson Grove, which was then quite in the country. His fame was so great outside Austria that directly he arrived in London ambassadors and noblemen called on him, and every one was anxious to know him and do him honour. He was made a doctor of music at Oxford, he was a guest at Guildhall banquets and his music was played at numberless concerts. His portrait, painted by Hoppner while he was in England, is now at Hampton Court.

There is one of Haydn's compositions that is very familiar to English people, and that is the Austrian national anthem. It was one of his favourite tunes and he used it in one of his quartets. There are other works of Haydn's that English people too know well, and those are his two oratorios *The Creation* and *The Seasons*, which he wrote quite late in life.

After having paid two visits to London, Haydn settled at last in Vienna, where he was now famous. During the last few years of his long life he became weaker

and unable to work, but he lived very contentedly, and when Vienna was bombarded and occupied by the French he showed great calm and courage. The last visit he received was from a French officer who sang one of his songs to him, and the last piece Haydn himself played, only a few days before his death, was the *Emperor's hymn*, the national anthem he had composed.

Beethoven was a pupil of Haydn's for a short time and played one of his concertos, and at Haydn's last appearance in Vienna Beethoven was present and embraced him in public.

In those days, as we have seen, musicians were really servants of the nobleman for whom they worked, and in whose house they lived, but Haydn was independent in character and was very conscious of the dignity of his artistic position. He only wore the Prince's uniform when actually conducting. He even reproved the Prince if he found fault with what Haydn felt was his province. Benevolent, good-natured, very kind-hearted and generous, very appreciative of other people's work and always working to make his own better, he learnt until the end of his life. He was most open-minded. When other musicians criticized passages in Mozart's music he would answer, "Art is free, if Mozart wrote this he had a good reason for it."

Haydn did not talk of music much, but he had very clear ideas of his own. He realized that melody, really tuneful themes, was the charm of music and a charm that only real genius can produce. Few musicians can

write really beautiful melodies. One of the wonders of Haydn's music is its fresh spontaneous feeling and the care with which it is written, and the wonder is all the greater when we realize that he wrote more than one hundred and fifty symphonies with beautiful slow movements, gay and delicate minuets, interesting and developed first and last movements ; also seventy-seven quartets, each with several movements ; and besides all these a great deal of music for other orchestral instruments, for the clavier, for the organ ; and also a number of light operas for performance by the small company employed by Prince Esterhazy, together with oratorios and many songs for solo and chorus.

In view of his development of the art of writing for orchestra, Haydn is always considered the Father of Modern Music. The private orchestras when Haydn lived were usually small and the instruments used were strings, flutes, oboes, bassoons, horns, trumpets and drums. The strings are a part of the orchestra with which every one is familiar, the first violins seated on the left-hand side of the conductor and the principal violin player considered as the leader of the whole orchestra ; the second violins seated usually on the right ; the violas, the slightly larger violin with deeper tone, able to make beautiful deep sounds of its own ; the 'cellos the same shape, but so large that they are played held between the knees of the player, and the double basses of such size that the players have to stand to play them.

The flute is a well-known instrument and we recog-

nize it by sight in an orchestra when we see it held sideways to the player's mouth, and we recognize the sound by its high clear notes of soft breathing quality.

The oboes are not usually so well known by sight, but their peculiar quality of sound is easily recognized, for they give rather penetrating sound like a shepherd's pipe. Whenever people imagine a pastoral dance with shepherds piping, it is an oboe of which they think.

The bassoon is a low or bass oboe, so if wind instruments play together the bassoon takes the lowest part, but its higher notes are very beautiful. Haydn, who understood it very well, wrote beautiful solo passages for it.

Flutes, oboes and bassoons are all instruments of wood and are called the " woodwind " of the orchestra.

Horns are easily recognized by sight, being made of brass, and their long tube curved round in a circle with its wide bell-like opening at one end. They are very easily seen among other instruments. Horns give a full soft tone and they often hold long notes while other instruments play more moving passages. They thus make a good body of sound which combines very well with other instruments, and does not contrast too much with them.

Trumpets and drums are familiar to every one. We know the brilliant sound of trumpets in military trumpet calls, and we recognize what beautiful effects can be made with their brilliance in works by such composers as Purcell, Bach and Handel.

Anyone who listens to an orchestral work by Bach and then to one of Haydn's symphonies will realize what a difference there is between them. In Bach's work if an instrument plays at all it probably plays from beginning to end of the piece, and the piece has therefore one kind of sound throughout. But in a Haydn symphony there are endless surprises; while the strings are playing the woodwind instruments will come in unexpectedly for a short passage, and there are constant feelings of freshness from the use of different instruments ; some instruments stop, others play and the quality of the sound varies all the time.

Bach had written works for instruments, as had A. Scarlatti, in several movements, but in Haydn's work these movements became much more diversified and tuneful. The first movement in sonata form with different themes makes an important and interesting beginning ; then comes a slow movement, quiet usually and with effects of great feeling ; then a third movement in the form of a minuet, and in Haydn's and his successors' work the minuet was a light gay tuneful dance, one of the most charming moments in the work. Lastly a fourth movement, important but light in character, making a dignified end to the whole work.

Haydn's genius was so great that his works became a model for composers after him, and his music was so sincere and beautiful that it is still treasured and enjoyed by every one who loves music.

CHAPTER XIII

ITALIAN OPERA

THERE is one special kind of music that we now have to consider which was not influenced at all by Bach or Haydn. During Bach's lifetime Italian opera was given in all important towns, and most people considered opera the most important kind of music. Concerts such as we know now were then usually given in noblemen's private houses or by musical people among themselves and the few public ones were attended only by educated people. But it was different with opera performances. They offered a sort of music every one enjoyed. We can still hear the kind of singing which was then popular when we go to a concert and some famous singer gives an aria of that period with wonderful trills and long notes and performs all sorts of difficult feats. Singing like this was highly appreciated in those days. People would time how long a singer held a certain note, and go wild with excitement when he or she did something very wonderful and difficult. The singers had become so important that the songs in the operas were written specially for them, and the interest of the opera lay less in the story than in the way the singers sang their solos. This opera music was Italian in origin but it was found everywhere. France had opera of its own

written by musicians who imitated Lulli, and Germany had opera at Hamburg under the composer Keiser. But in Paris Italian opera was given ; it was universal.

As famous opera singers demanded enormous sums of money in payment for their services, only a few could be engaged for any opera, and as they were often very jealous of each other, each had to be as important as another, and operas were so influenced by this that at last they were all written in a stereotyped manner. Each singer had to have so many solo songs in each act and no trouble was taken about the recitative parts of the work, for no one listened to them. In fact the sense of the whole story did not matter much, only the feeling in each song. When Handel wrote operas his genius was so great that he made the story of his operas matter, and in spite of having such fixed arrangements for the singers, he wrote works that were really dramatic and moving. But even he had great difficulties with his singers and he did not alter the accepted way in which operas were written with arias of set kinds in set numbers for each singer ; he only succeeded in using that way in so masterly a manner that its absurd conventions were lost sight of in the beauty and power of his music.

The singers of the time were very talented performers. A really great singer of that day given a good, broad, smooth melody could so use his voice that even if the music was rather dull he put such life and feeling into his performance that his audience was completely carried away. The way, however, in which operas

had to be written to please such singers would seem to us really ridiculous. Goldoni, the well-known writer of Italian plays, describes how he once wrote the words for an opera, and a famous dancer to whose house in Milan he went, introduced him to one of the directors of the theatre so that he might read the libretto with a view to its being produced. Several opera singers were present, among them the famous Caffariello. After hearing a few sentences, Caffariello said the libretto was impossible, because the part he would take entailed his appearance at the beginning so that he would not be properly heard with the noise of people still entering the theatre. Another singer also criticized the libretto, saying no opera was ever written with nine singers, seven was the most that could be employed. When finally the director, unable to control the noise and confusion, took Goldoni into another room to hear the whole work, he explained that though Goldoni had indeed written a good tragic play, the libretto was not suited to opera—because opera then had to follow rules quite without sense. A play that would please the public, he said, was useless. The first thing was to please the singers. In order to do that there must be only three principal singers, each must have five airs to sing and the less important singers must only have three airs, and above all it was most important not to give the less important singers anything very interesting to sing as that would never be allowed by the principals. The director went on to give

Goldoni many more rules about how the composer of the music must have places where he could make special effects and the scene-painter must also be considered, and Goldoni was convinced, as is anyone who reads his narrative, that though Italian opera at that time may have been concerned with beautiful singing, it certainly did not demand either a good libretto or perfect music.

These Italian operas were regarded as important works, and written as they were according to such set conventions and rules, if the composer was learned but not inspired, they were lacking in feeling and the music in parts was dry. The singers' powers of making the effect of the music as they sang often gave such arias a vitality that they did not naturally possess and the rest of the music sounded all the more uninteresting in contrast, though probably no one listened to it. There were, of course, composers such as Jommelli and Porpora who had great gifts for writing dignified arias in operas of this kind, arias being the part of the music that mattered most.

Such opera is now called " opera seria," and it became customary in Italy for light musical interludes to be added between the acts as a relaxation from the strain of listening to the operas themselves. These interludes gradually formed little comic plays, and after each act of the " opera seria " there came a short act of a comic play, also to music. Gradually these light interlude plays were so well written that they were in turn regarded as operas, only of a light and comic kind.

As well as these interlude operas, or "intermezzi," as they were sometimes called, some composers tried the experiment of setting to music comic plays, some of them written in the local dialect. These were not, like the intermezzi, written to be performed in separate acts between the various acts of an opera seria, but were written to be performed as an evening's entertainment in themselves. The famous Scarlatti wrote light opera of this kind, and so did several well-known composers, Leonardo Leo (1694–1744), Leonardo Vinci (1690–1730), Nicolo Logroscino (1700–1763) and Pergolesi (1710–1736). Such light opera was called "opera buffa," and it became very popular.

Opera buffa, or comic opera as we should call it, was a far more natural and amusing entertainment than the important operas, and the best works of this kind attained a great success all over Europe.

When Pergolesi's opera buffa was given between the acts of one of Lulli's operas in Paris a famous Frenchman was among the audience—Jean Jacques Rousseau. He was much impressed by this delightful work, and did his best to rouse the interest of the Parisians in this new gay art, while he himself wrote the first French light opera, "opéra comique," as it is called, *Le Devin du Village*. The Italian company which performed the comic operas of Pergolesi and others in Paris had an immense success. The singers might not be very wonderful but the music was charming. The Parisians showed that they like the Italians

could enjoy light opera with its delicate music, its light-hearted humour and gay simplicity.

Rousseau's championship of this new art roused the opposition of the Parisians who supported the regular French opera. The partisans on each side were very jealous of each other and Paris became the scene of a fierce controversy, still known as the " Guerre des Bouffons." However, comic opera became more and more popular and French composers with little musical education but with a genius for light music began to produce works of this kind. The earliest French composer of opéra comique was Monsigny (1729–1817), and he was followed by Grétry (1741–1813). These composers wrote music which still charms us by its gaiety, pathos, grace and humour. It is useless to listen to it expecting to hear what to a trained musician would be things of technical interest, interesting use of instruments and themes and such devices, which are part of the power of composers musically educated, but the music is youthful, light-hearted and sometimes brilliant. The accompaniments may seem thin to us but the melodies are tuneful and the feeling of the characters has truth and charm.

Opera seria was still a popular art, and when comic opera became so successful cultivated musicians wrote comic as well as serious operas. Many of these later composers were famous in their day though their music is now heard very seldom. Such were Piccini (1728–1800), Cimarosa (1749–1801), Paisiello (1741–1815) and

Paer (1771–1839). When Mozart's operas with their depth of feeling, their marvellous new powers of orchestration and their many beauties became known in Italy and France, the works of these composers sounded empty in comparison, and though a few of these operas, such as Cimarosa's *Il Matrimonio Segreto*, are revived at times and are still delightful, many of the works of this period sound superficial and empty and revivals are rare.

When light opera was first produced in Paris the greatest French composer of the day was Rameau. He wrote operas in the accepted manner like Lulli and his followers and he had a far greater sense of beauty than Lulli. He was a much more cultivated musician and his new orchestral effects and new harmonies and rhythms did much to make opera more vivid and expressive. Unlike contemporary Italian composers, to whom opera seems to have meant a collection of songs to display the voice, Rameau, in company with other composers of the French school, was interested in the dramatic feeling of his operas. He realized how much of this lay in moving recitative, and this part of his operas was especially striking. It was beautiful, dignified and effective. It was these recitatives that made a great impression on the next most famous opera composer, Willibald Gluck.

Gluck (1714–1787) was born eighteen years before Haydn. When he first began to write operas he studied in Italy and wrote like Italian composers. He was invited to England at the time that Handel was in London and Italian opera was very popular, but the work Gluck

produced was a complete failure. For sixteen years he studied trying to find what principles would make opera a unified work of art and for six years he lived in Vienna where he constantly produced new music and where he was for a time singing master to Marie Antoinette.

At last he produced an opera, *Orpheus and Eurydice*, which was quite unlike the accepted Italian opera. Gluck used no rules, he wrote solos, chorus, concerted pieces and different effects of orchestral music exactly as he liked ; the music was only there to enhance the story, not to show off the voices of the singers. The Viennese found such a work difficult to listen to and did not enjoy it, and when he produced another opera, *Alceste*, five years later, it was again coldly received.

His first great success was an opera called *Iphigenia in Aulis*, produced in Paris in 1774 by the influence of his old pupil Marie Antoinette. So sincere was the expression, so simple the melodies and the whole work had such dramatic power that it was greeted with an ovation. He wrote two more important operas, *Armide* and *Iphigenia in Tauride*, and his works became models for serious opera. Not only did Gluck set opera free from the caprices of singers, and show composers how important and effective it was to write music that helped to emphasize the meaning of the play, but he also made technical improvements in vocal accompaniment. In Handel's operas a harpsichord played all the time with its rather jingling sound. Alessandro Scarlatti had tried to do without it and Gluck would

not have a harpsichord at all. He wanted his effects of sound to be different and clear and varied, not always mixed with the sound of the harpsichord.

The beauty of Gluck's work has never faded. The years since he lived have produced many changes in the way music for operas is written, but his operas even now have lost none of their charm. The means he used were very simple, for he was not a technically accomplished musician, but the depth of beauty he produced with such means is unforgettable. He was so filled with the desire to produce only music that was sincere that at times he unnecessarily sacrificed his natural feeling for beauty to his feeling for dramatic truth, as if such feelings were opposed; but this sense of opposition disappeared in his later work, and his operas are full of lovely melodies and lovely passages of sound, and apart from the intrinsic charm of his work lies that which gave his operas such an influence on later composers. He was the first musician who made each opera a single whole, with an individual atmosphere entirely its own. Each of his operas, from the beginning of the overture to the end of the work, is a united whole, creating a special and living atmosphere. To enhance the dramatic truth of the story, and thus make the atmosphere of the work, Gluck poured out his enchanting music and created new beauties of sound both descriptive and passionate.

As a matter of history and as a guide to the sort of music to expect from certain composers it is interesting

to understand the differences which underlay Italian, French and German opera. That there were real differences, fully appreciated by audiences at the time, is certain.

Italian opera in the hands of Peri, Caccini and Monteverde was a new and moving form of art. The stories for such serious operas were taken at first from Greek tragedies, and in any case they were never humorous. Themes of this kind to be carried out in music needed powers that many composers did not possess. They could write songs which were the most easily appreciated parts of any opera, and since Italians as a nation were devoted to singing, this was the part of their operas that received all their attention. In studying public taste without any vision of their own the work of many Italian composers became very artificial. Their music did however develop the art of expressive solo singing and the solo songs called arias were the special characteristic of Italian opera. In opera buffa, which also originated in Italy, though the singers did not matter much and the aim was to have a simple natural story of daily life with comic characters and plenty of human gaiety, it was still the melodies for solo voices that were the important part of the opera, and gay, well-written tunes were entertainment enough even if the stories were sometimes rather stupid. Opera buffa might not be so magnificent as opera seria, but it combined lovely songs with natural gaiety and thus appealed both to the Italian love of gaiety as well as to the national love of singing.

French taste was far more interested in the story and general outline of the drama than in the actual singing, and this can be seen in the operas of Lulli (the first composer of French opera) and Rameau. In them dances, chorus and declamation, or, as we should say, recitative, are all important and the interest lies in them quite as much as in the songs. In the hands of lesser composers the music became dull, and French opéra comique had an added popularity in contrast to the serious operas written by composers who were not great enough to carry out their aim of grand dramatic work.

The special characteristic of German opera was the truth and fidelity of feeling expressed. It might only be at moments, but it was this depth of feeling that appealed to German audiences and made German operas a success. There was very little German opera before Mozart. The earliest works were founded on well-known Bible stories and then on homely stories of everyday life. War put an end to musical development on this line, and when German opera was revived it was in the form of what was known as " singspiel," an operetta which was carried on partly in music and partly in speech, and it was in this form that Mozart wrote his German operas *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, where the spoken part seems unimportant, so full is the music of beauty and imagination, and *Zauberflöte*, his last most perfect work with its unsurpassed depths of feeling and its expression of his unique vision.

Mozart with his Father, Leopold,
and his Sister, Marianne

Engraved by Delafosse (1764), after Carmondelle.
(*In the British Museum*).

CHAPTER XIV

MOZART

THE most gifted musician the world has ever known, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791), was born in the little Austrian town of Salzburg. No other musician has ever had such combination of genius and learning or so excelled in all kinds of music. When only three years old he enjoyed music and picked out notes on the clavier. When he was five he began to compose and play little pieces which his father wrote down. The pieces he wrote when he was six are still played by children; they are tuneful and charming. Mozart had a very happy childhood. His father was a good musician, who devoted himself to teaching his two children, a girl Marianne and the boy Wolfgang. As well as this he was a Court musician to Archbishop Sigismund, the ruler of Salzburg.

When Wolfgang was seven his father began to take him journeys to various important towns to show off his and his sister's wonderful powers. They went to Munich, Vienna and Paris, and England, and everywhere had great success. The little Mozart played the most difficult pieces for the clavier and violin and he also played the organ. He was only twelve years old when he wrote an Italian opera, *La Finta Giardiniera*, which is still sometimes performed and has real beauty.

His powers were considered so marvellous that he was often given special tests. Once he was shut up for a week in a room with the words of an opera and the means of writing to see if he really wrote alone and understood the technique of writing for orchestra and voices. He was always successful in these tests, and when his father took him to Italy it was like a triumphal tour. Wherever he went people crowded to see him and a way had to be cleared for him to enter any church where he was going to play the organ. He and his father arrived in Rome on the Wednesday in Holy Week just in time to go and hear the music in the Papal Chapel. On Wednesday and Friday of that week a special work by Allegri was always sung. It was partly in five parts, partly in eight, and as it was never sung anywhere else it was considered a wonderful thing to hear. Mozart was so interested that he performed a marvellous feat of memory. He listened to the five and eight part chorus, and then wrote down the music afterwards, and when he heard the work again two days later he corrected the few notes he had not remembered and had a perfect copy of this seldom heard music. No other musician has had quite such a memory for music. In later life he played all his numerous concertos by heart, and very often when he composed a work for clavier and other instruments he did not write down the clavier part but only the other parts, and played his own without a mistake though he had never heard it with the other instruments except in his head.

At one concert in Vienna the Emperor thought he could see that Mozart only had a blank sheet of paper in front of him when he played a sonata with a violinist. He therefore sent and asked to see this music. Mozart brought him the paper, which was indeed blank, and explained that it was a new composition of his and that he had only written down the violin part the day before and had had no time to write the clavier part.

It was so all through his life. His mind was so clear about music that he never began to write down a piece, whether for orchestra, instruments or voices, until it was all quite finished in his head. By that time he himself knew it so well that the actual labour of writing became irksome, and sometimes when writing out a long orchestral work he was glad to have amusing conversation round him to relieve the tedium of transcription. No one has ever as he did lived so completely in music. His MS. books went with him on all his travels, and he was constantly writing. He had not much knowledge of J. S. Bach's music until on a visit to Leipzig he heard the pupils at Bach's school, the Thomas Schule, perform one of his cantatas. Mozart was enraptured : " Here is music from which one can learn something," he exclaimed, and he had all the music by Bach which the school possessed brought out for him to see. Now music is usually written with all the parts for voices or instruments one above the other on the same page: this is called " full score " and it makes it easy for a musician to see at once what all the

instruments and voices are doing at the same time and so hear the music in his head. But in this case each part was written on a separate sheet. Mozart, nothing daunted, spread the sheets all round him, and enjoyed combining and hearing in his head this wonderful music.

By the time Mozart was twenty-one he was a fully equipped musician. He had written serious and comic operas, a great deal of Church music, and though other musicians usually played one instrument and were famous for that alone, Mozart could play clavier, violin and organ and compete with the greatest performers of his time.

But there was one great misfortune in his life, and that was the lack of music in Salzburg and the difficulty he had in getting away. The prince for whom he and his father worked was the Archbishop Hieronimos, who was hated by the people he governed and disliked by his musicians. Most of the great nobles were proud of the famous musicians whom they employed, and glad to encourage them and give them opportunities to produce new works and make for themselves fame and money. But Archbishop Hieronimos not only paid extremely small salaries to his musicians, but he disliked giving them leave of absence, and though he was proud of having good musicians in his service and getting them to write music for special occasions, he never gave the customary salaries without which it was almost impossible to live, and he was constantly making

his musicians feel their subordinate position. Michael Haydn, a brother of the famous composer Joseph Haydn, was himself a good composer and in the employment of the Archbishop at Salzburg. Once when he was ill and unable to finish some compositions which the Archbishop wanted by a certain date, he was told that if he did not complete them in time his salary would be stopped. Michael Haydn, in despair, appealed to Mozart, who was all his life generous in money and effort for anyone in need, and Mozart at once wrote the required works for him.

The Archbishop was constantly rude to Mozart, and after he had learnt all it was possible for outside things to teach him and was recognized as a famous composer, the Archbishop told him he was a bad servant and ought to study more. Mozart's father, feeling that his son's future depended on his having a regular position and fixed income, however small, put up with the constant insults and kept out of the Archbishop's way as much as he could, only saying, " The Prince does not like old men." But with young Mozart it was different. On his travels he had everywhere been received with courtesy and appreciation. To the end of his life he remained unspoiled by his success, and he was accustomed to be on terms of friendship and equality with the great nobles whose houses he visited and at whose concerts he played. Mozart's father realized that it was impossible for his son to remain in Salzburg. His talents were wasted there.

There were no concerts at which to play, no one needed operas composed, there were no other great musicians, and when the Archbishop put too many difficulties in the way of his travelling and gaining commissions to write and a wider view of his art, he realized at last that the only way was for him to resign his post. So young Mozart left Salzburg, accompanied by his mother, and travelled through Munich to Paris.

It was not, however, his last unpleasantness with the Archbishop. This Prince soon felt that he had made a mistake in losing so good a musician, and offered him a larger salary if only he would return to Salzburg. Against all his inclinations Mozart at last gave way, and went back to join the Archbishop's suite at Vienna. There he was made to take meals with the valets and cooks and was not allowed to go and play at other houses and thus acquire money and fame as all other artists did. He was so constantly insulted that he at last again resigned and was kicked out of the house by one of the Archbishop's servants.

Mozart now settled in Vienna and lived a very busy life. The Emperor Joseph himself always had his midday meal in his music-room and hurried over his food as quickly as possible so that he might have an hour's concert before he went on with the work of the day. Many Hungarian and Austrian noblemen lived in Vienna and had daily or weekly concerts which often lasted several hours. Even the servants in noble houses were sometimes engaged only if they could play

a musical instrument as well as perform their domestic duties, and the standard of playing was very high.

Noblemen in Vienna as well as having private orchestras, engaged for their daily concerts any famous musician who came to Vienna, and gave large presents in money to the musicians who thus played for them, besides giving them commissions to compose music to be performed at their concerts. Mozart was in constant request at these concerts ; he also gave lessons, and all the time he composed. Sometimes when listening to other people's music, or even when playing a game, his lips would move humming or whistling the notes he heard in his head, and he would dot down a few notes on a scrap of paper to remind him of what he had been composing. Every morning he wrote music, and in the evening he sat and played far into the night, played not pieces he had composed but improvisation, as it is called, just music as it flowed through his mind and out through his fingers. Those who heard it said it was the most beautiful music they had ever heard and it made an unforgettable impression on them.

These improvisations did not only take place at night in Mozart's house, but whenever he gave a concert he would take a theme or tune, sometimes more than one, and improvise on it to the delight of his audience. Concerts in those days were much longer than those we have now, and people attended day after day with unwearied delight. Much of the music to which they listened was lighter in character than the music we

hear at concerts now, for a great deal of the gay spirit that gave pleasure at that time disappeared when composers definitely aimed at expressing depth of feeling.

It seems wonderful to us that Mozart could have accomplished the amount of work he did, teaching, playing almost daily at concerts, and for his own performance at these concerts composing his numerous piano concertos, still some of the most beautiful music that has been written for the piano. He composed clavier sonatas as well for his pupils to play. In those days many noble ladies were good performers on the clavier, and Mozart gave music lessons to several such ladies, and took trouble to write music for them to perform. He also composed symphonies for his concerts; but his greatest desire always was to write operas.

In Vienna the Emperor, Joseph II, did not wish to spend much on music, and when he did give Mozart a regular appointment it was with a very small salary. This obliged Mozart to depend on lessons and concerts to make enough to live. The Emperor was, however, interested in the revival of German art though he himself preferred Italian opera, which he found lightly entertaining, while the depth of meaning and fullness that Gluck, Haydn and Mozart put into their music overpowered him almost to weariness. However, he wished to encourage German opera and wished to give Mozart an opportunity. The result was that Mozart wrote *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (The Elopement

from the Seraglio). It was what was called a German vaudeville or singspiel, that is, a comic opera in which much was spoken, with songs and concerted vocal pieces inserted. It had an enormous success and still has whenever it is performed. The great musician Weber, who himself later wrote such beautiful operas, was very fond of *Die Entführung*. He felt it was the work in which Mozart became a finished musician. Experience of life taught him to write beautiful operas afterwards, but it was his complete experience of music that enabled him to produce this light and beautiful vaudeville.

The work was first produced in July, 1782. In August of the same year Mozart married Constanze Weber.

Besides all his music Mozart found time to enjoy himself. He was not only very happy with his wife, but very fond of congenial society. His wife arranged parties in their house and many hours were passed with friends in gaiety and merriment. Mozart also loved fine clothes and dressing up and made many occasions for light-hearted convivial amusements.

At this period of his life he made a good deal of money by his concert playing, but composition was never lucrative. A small fee was given for an opera and the composer received nothing of the large sums which might be made from it later on. So Mozart had very little regular income, but when Frederick William II of Prussia offered him a good salary if he would move to Berlin, the Emperor Joseph appealed

to Mozart to remain in Vienna, and Mozart did so, though in constant trouble for money.

To us it may seem strange that he should have been anxious and eager to compose operas and should have found so little encouragement. The truth is that Mozart's playing was so inspiring that many people who appreciated and could pay him for that can hardly have realized how supreme his compositions were. It was only understood by the greatest contemporary musicians such as Joseph Haydn, who constantly tried to get Mozart commissions and appointments knowing his genius and the beauties that he alone could produce. In Vienna his playing was admired but his compositions, though successful, were not appreciated as they should have been. Also Mozart was young, too young, for his life, so full of music and beauty, ended when he was only thirty-five. Other musicians such as Haydn were indeed famous by that age, but that compelling fame which brought them money and admiration wherever they went only came in later years. Though Haydn worked for a fairly good salary for Prince Esterhazy and his works were known and appreciated by other musicians all over Europe, it was not till he was over sixty and had been to England that he was really well off, and in such a commanding position that he was properly paid for all he did and venerated as a great master. Such years never came to Mozart. His life of constant work, full of the joys of music, of friends and of his own unquenchable gaiety,

was hampered by daily difficulties. His wife, Constanze, was delicate, and neither of them was very good at managing what money they had, though they lived very simply and spent very little on food. One day a friend came in on a cold day and found them dancing together because they had no money to buy wood to make a fire, and Mozart, whose spirit never failed, proposed dancing in order to keep warm.

In 1786 Mozart produced in Vienna his opera, *Le Nozze di Figaro*. It is full of beautiful melody, wonderful in the use of the orchestra, original in the clear realization of the characters and vivid and fresh. It has an immortal beauty. Its success was immediate, but still Mozart was not released from the necessity of giving lessons and playing to earn money. Some old friends who had seen the difficulties in his way in Vienna, the constant efforts made by other musicians in more assured positions to prevent his operas being too successful, and their constant jealousy of his genius, arranged for *Figaro* to be given in Prague, and for Mozart to be present. The applause was tumultuous. Mozart stayed in the house of a nobleman, Count Thun, and gave concerts which made him a good sum of money and he entered on a contract to produce another opera for Prague the next year. He then wrote *Don Giovanni*. This opera has melodies we all know and love. It has always had a special position among artists of all kinds. Not only have musicians felt that it was a perfect opera, but Goethe said that it had ful-

filled his greatest feelings of how music could ennoble tragedy. Even now as we hear it we feel we meet in Mozart a unique personality who wrote with such clearness of vision that situations and characters which might have been sordid have a light thrown on them by his music that lifts them from the ordinary world of good and bad, makes fresh additions to our knowledge of human character and expands our powers of sympathy and feeling.

Still Mozart's position did not improve. A year later the Emperor again commissioned an opera and this time Mozart had to take a story chosen for him : *Cosi fan Tutte*. The subjects of *Figaro* and *Don Giovanni* he had chosen himself, and the words, libretti as they are called, had been written by an artist, da Ponte, with whom he could discuss the works as they proceeded. Mozart's refinement and wealth of music is to be found in this opera as in his others. It creates a world where what is fanciful is so beautiful that we see the ordinary world of reality in a new way, and as we listen to the music we realize that gaiety of heart is a most vital force and a most far-reaching illumination. It is music that only Mozart could have written, and the opera is still performed with delight to whoever hears it.

In spite of his artistic successes, Mozart was now seriously in need of money. His wife was ill, and her ill-health was a constant strain on his finances. These cares seemed as if they would affect his power to write.

He toured a few German towns to give concerts, and he had to pawn his silver in order to get enough money to set out on his journey. When he returned to Vienna it was just in time to say good-bye to " Papa Haydn " before he went to London.

It was at this moment that a theatrical manager, Schikaneder, who had a poor theatre, a barn rather than a theatre, in Vienna, asked Mozart if he would write for him the music of a magic opera, *Zauberflöte* (The Magic Flute). As Constanze Mozart was away undergoing a cure, Mozart lived in a summer-house in the courtyard of the theatre while he composed. He was also writing at this time his famous Requiem, which had been commissioned by a mysterious stranger. Mozart himself said that the Requiem was a work which lay very near his heart. He was ill and overdone, and when his wife returned from Baden he told her he was writing the Requiem for himself. She was much distressed at his condition and took away the music, and for a time his health improved. It was only for a short time. He became much worse; the long strain of writing the *Zauberflöte* and the Requiem had been too much for him, and the success of the opera which seemed at last to promise an easier life was useless to him. During the last days of his life offers came from Hungary and Amsterdam of a large settled income in return for the compositions it would have been his joy to produce, but it was too late. For a fortnight he lay, conscious that he was dying, knowing

that the end had come to his work and that he was leaving his wife and two children just when he could have made money to support them in greater ease and comfort.

On December 5th, 1791, he fell asleep, and did not wake again. His wife was completely prostrated. His few friends who took part in the service in church did not go to the graveside, for a storm of snow and sleet was raging. The friend who arranged the funeral, though rich, had not considered what was due to a genius who lives now in the heart of every one who loves music. Mozart was buried in a common grave, and when his wife visited the churchyard no one could tell her where that grave was.

To no other musician has music seemed such a natural language as it was to Mozart. He seemed a being in complete harmony. Free from self-consciousness, with a perfect sense of proportion, writing from pure inspiration, he never strove for expression beyond his powers. Sometimes we imagine the piano sonatas and concertos are works for children ; but as we grow older we hear under their simplicity the deep feeling and varied beauty they convey. His operas are the beginning of modern opera ; his orchestration the beginning of modern orchestral music, and some of the most beautiful ; his lovely quartets, the beautiful music of the Requiem, all these show Mozart's unique powers. And through them all shine a spirit, so pure, so uplifted that to anyone who can enjoy his music there is

open the door to a realm of beauty whose clearness and lightness are unknown elsewhere.

His last opera, *The Magic Flute*, sums up as it were his unique powers and shows the new beauties he could create. Here we meet characters that are more real to us than people in everyday life, so vivid does his music make them. Here too we find the seriousness that underlay all his music. Here too are the magic passages that can only be represented completely in music, the music of ineffable charm that he wrote for the magic flute and the chime of bells. It is indeed a magic opera of magic beauty and magic power. It won admiration and affection from Beethoven and Goethe as from all lovers of music since, and its beauties of sound and spirit are so many they seem inexhaustible.

CHAPTER XV

BEETHOVEN

IT was in 1787 that Mozart was asked to hear the playing of a promising young musician who had just come to Vienna, Ludwig van Beethoven. After performing what Mozart seemed to think was only a show piece, Beethoven asked if he might improvise. Mozart, whose own playing was full of feeling, and who cared only for beauty of feeling and not for display, was impressed by young Beethoven's improvisation and said, " Mark that young man, he will make a name for himself in the world." Beethoven did indeed make a name for himself, and people of the present day not only know his name, but probably his music, better than they do the music of any other great composer.

Ludwig van Beethoven, who attracted Mozart's attention, was born at Bonn in 1770. He had an unhappy childhood. His father, who was a singer in the chapel of the Elector of Cologne, was quickly aware of his son's talent for music and from early years trained him with great severity. Ludwig was kept practising while other children played games, and he would sit crying over the piano. On one occasion he was roused from sleep when his father and a friend came back from a tavern and was made to play all night. By the age of seven he was a good performer on the clavier and

gave public concerts, and by the age of eleven he was so proficient on the organ that the Court organist left him to do a great deal of his work when he had to be away. Beethoven was glad of the work, for his father drank and the family depended more and more on this son whose music could earn money. He himself realized when quite young that any improvement in his circumstances and any hope of getting on in life could only come from unremitting work at his art ; and his art was a release from the troubles of his home life. Ludwig was able to hear much good music in Bonn, for the orchestra there was famous and the greatest musicians of the day came to hear it. In Bonn, too, he made lifelong friends, Madame Breuning, who fostered his love of literature, and Count Waldstein, to whom one of his most famous piano sonatas is dedicated. But all the time his home made constant demands on him, first his drunken father, then the care of his two younger brothers.

At last in 1795 he was able to go to Vienna, which was the musical centre of the world. One short visit he had paid there when he was seventeen, that time when he had played to Mozart, but then he had to hurry home because of the death of his mother. Now after Mozart's death he settled in Vienna permanently, and there he became famous. Various noblemen made friends with Beethoven, and he wrote much music for performance at their concerts and began the series of nine symphonies that are now so well known. He made,

in fact, a great position for himself in Vienna. His independence of character, his rough humour, his jokes, his outspokenness have all been described by contemporaries. His friends were devoted to him even if they feared his sudden bursts of suspicion, and strangers who were congenial to him found him in odd ways amusing as well as interesting. For he enjoyed life and society in his own way with great vitality.

When he was twenty-six a great disaster came upon him. He had a dangerous illness which left him deaf. Reckless of his health and absorbed in music as he was, he could not ignore his deafness, which seemed the greatest physical ill that could come to an artist whose life and work depended on his hearing. In the year that he wrote the well-known sonata we call the *Moonlight* sonata he wrote to a friend: "What was most precious to me, my hearing, has been in great part lost. How sad my life is. I must now take refuge in the sadness of resignation."

Beethoven, however, was not mute in resignation. He composed constantly, and it was about a year after this letter that he wrote the well-known violin sonata known as the *Kreutzer*, because it is dedicated to the violin player Kreutzer, who was a member of the household of Bernadotte, the French Ambassador in Vienna. He also began his famous third symphony, now called the *Eroica*, written because he wished to express in it his admiration for the career of Napoleon. Before, however, the work was sent to Paris he heard

the news of Napoleon's taking the title of Emperor. In his fury at this act, for his admiration of the great soldier had been founded on the belief that Napoleon stood for the fight against the power of kings and emperors, Beethoven tore off the title-page and threw it to the ground, and when he published the symphony he named it "An heroic symphony to celebrate the memory of a great man." He had realized, after six years of doctors' efforts, there was no hope that his hearing would improve, and he took refuge in writing works which he could hear in his head if not with his outward ears.

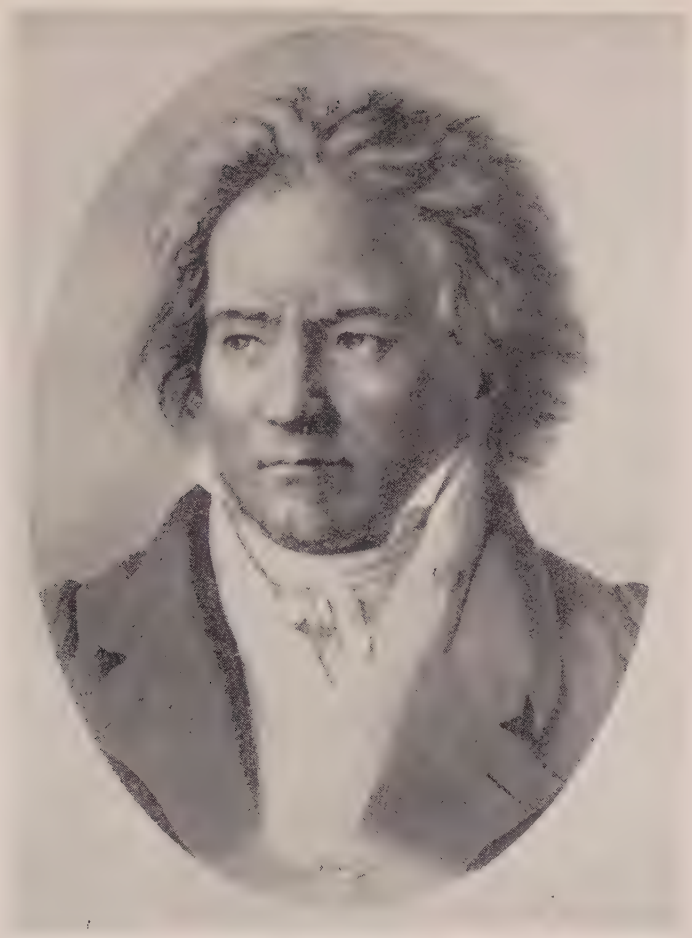
With Beethoven's work we find a new impulse in music, which is absent in the compositions of older musicians. We do not feel that it is beauty at which he is aiming in his compositions. That beauty was part of his aim and that he attained it is undoubted; but it was the expression of human longing, human effort, human moods and human attainments of nobility and greatness that he first desired to express, and with this end in view he did not scruple to strain the resources of music to their utmost. So he would write parts for the voice that were almost impossible to sing, and parts for instruments that were almost impossible to play, and nothing would make him alter a note. He took an immense time before he was satisfied with his work; themes and passages would be written and rewritten in his notebooks, and once he felt they were perfect he would alter nothing.

He had great happinesses in his life ; many times he fell in love and several times hoped to marry, but some difficulty or some devotion to his music put an end each time to such plans and he never married. It was at a time when he was in love that he wrote his one opera *Fidelio*, and his best-known symphony, the fifth, in C minor, was written soon after. *Fidelio* is a beautiful work, and if at times the action seems to flag while the music goes on, that music is so lovely that no one thinks of anything else and no one would miss a note of it.

Beethoven made a good income by his compositions and three princes in Vienna gave him a yearly salary to enable him to live in Vienna with sufficient freedom to continue composing.

He had a violent temper and an almost fierce spirit of independence. On one occasion, when in the company of Goethe, they happened to meet the Court; Goethe politely took off his hat and waited for the Empress to pass, but Beethoven only raised his hand and strode through the party with his arms folded. As he afterwards said to Goethe : " You must let them clearly understand what manner of man you are. Princes can make a man a court counsellor, but they can never make a Beethoven or a Goethe."

In 1812 Vienna was suffering from the defeat of the Austrians by Napoleon, taxation was heavy, every one was poor and money was worth so little that Beethoven's income was very small. However, during the



Beethoven

Unknown photograph of the Drawing by A. von Kloeber, 1817.
(By courtesy of Ernest Benn, Ltd.)

Congress of Vienna he met many of the monarchs who attended, among them the Russian Empress at the house of the Russian ambassador, Count Rasumowsky. The Empress gave him a present of £100 and he received other sums which he was able to invest, and thus be more at ease.

One more trouble came into his life, his nephew Karl. One of Beethoven's brothers died leaving a little boy of eight. After battles in the law courts with the boy's mother Beethoven was at last made sole guardian of the child. He devoted himself to this nephew and worked hard at composing so as to make money for him. He wrote his famous Mass, and his last piano sonatas, more wonderful than any he had written before, and people now began to give him endless commissions so that he wrote to his other brother: "People are fighting to get works from me." He was commissioned by a Russian Prince Gallitzin to write five quartets. They are the last he wrote and contain some of his most magic music.

The *Hammerclavier* sonata, as it is called, Op. 106, the piano sonatas that follow it and these last quartets are indeed the most wonderful music Beethoven produced, greater in depth of feeling and in freedom of expression than even his well-known symphonies. Even now their poetry of feeling is only fully understood by a few people, so far-reaching is their expression and so far in advance of the time when they were written.

When the ninth symphony was given for the first time the applause was overwhelming. Never before had there been a symphony with not only orchestra but voices in solos and chorus. Beethoven was present, but his deafness was so great he heard nothing and he had to be turned round to face the audience and see them clapping their hands and waving their handkerchiefs. However, the symphonies and larger works did not bring him in money, so he devoted himself to the quartets he had been commissioned to write and for which he was to be well paid.

He was constantly anxious about his nephew. The young man failed at whatever career he tried. Finally he tried to commit suicide and was taken in charge by the police. As well as this, daily life had many vexations for Beethoven, for lost in his music he took no care of his personal appearance or the ordinary affairs of life and his servants were a constant difficulty. If he became absorbed in what he was writing he sometimes spent all day and all night alone, stamping up and down, roaring, shouting, spilling ink over the furniture as he wrote – sometimes pouring water over his hands until the floor was flooded. His deafness made him increasingly suspicious of friends who tried to help him, and his one resource was to write music and uplift himself from the troubles of his daily life and the constant anxiety about his nephew. Writing his last four quartets, he spent the last few months also planning to write a few more orchestral works which he

had sketched out and wished to finish. He was getting really infirm when his nephew was released by the police and had to leave Vienna. He went to stay with Beethoven's surviving brother. It was a household to which Beethoven himself had often refused to go. He and his brother had no common interests and Beethoven disliked the wife. However, he went to be with his nephew. The house was cold and damp ; no attention was paid to his growing ill-health, and when he understood that he was to pay for the food and lodging he found so uncomfortable he left, determined to take his nephew back to Vienna in spite of the police. The brother would not lend a close carriage for the first few miles of the journey and Beethoven travelled in an open conveyance in cold winter weather. He arrived back in Vienna very ill from exposure. The nephew, who accompanied him, did not call in a doctor at first, and then fetched one who did not know Beethoven and did not understand what was the matter. For nearly four months his strong constitution battled with the disease of which he died. Meanwhile the nephew returned to his regiment and Beethoven felt more at peace. He had quarrelled with the doctor who best understood him, but in this last illness the quarrel was made up and Dr. Malfatti again came and helped him to regain some of his old powers. He was in need of money for his nephew and his thoughts turned to England and its generosity. To his delight the Philharmonic Society of London sent him a sum of money

hoping to have the pleasure of fresh work of his composing, and Beethoven was so revived that he felt confident of sending them the symphony he had planned but which he never wrote. A few days later he was much worse, and on March 26th, 1827, while a storm of thunder and hail was raging, a crash of thunder and vivid flash of lightning roused him for a moment to hold his clenched fist up in the air. In a few seconds he fell back dead. His funeral was a wonderful scene. Alone as he had been so much of his life, on that spring day twenty thousand people attended his funeral. Soldiers had to force a clear way for the hearse from the house to the church. Many well-known musicians followed the great master, among them Schubert, who was afterwards buried near him.

Though Beethoven's music is well known it is not the most original works that are known the best. The great works written at the end of his life and after the period of his greatest misery over ill-health, money troubles and his worthless nephew, these are the works that give most the vision of that beauty towards which he strove and which never seemed so clearly his as in these latest compositions. The feeling in the last piano sonatas and last string quartets is so poignant, the vision of a beauty outside and beyond a world of suffering is so vivid, that in them Beethoven transcended the forms he usually accepted and wrote with a poetical breadth which is still touchingly moving and beautiful. Most musicians since Beethoven have con-

sidered that his work naturally falls into three periods. His earliest work was in the style prevalent at the time, the style used by Mozart and Haydn. From that he passed to the more fanciful piano sonatas Op. 31 and his best-known symphonies, the "Eroica," the seventh, and the Pastoral. Then came the final period when he wrote the late piano sonatas and quartets and when lovers of Beethoven feel he produced his greatest works, works that showed not only how he could extend and change the accepted forms of music, but works that conveyed with extraordinary feeling the spirit of the composer —his courage, his suffering, his attainment of serenity in a world of beauty that seems unallied with this world except that it wakes in our hearts when we hear it the answering sympathy of feeling with his suffering and with the uplifted triumph of his courage.

CHAPTER XVI

WEBER AND CONTEMPORARY OPERA COMPOSERS

VIENNA had now for a long time been the great centre to which musicians were attracted. Mozart and Haydn met there, and many other musicians famous in their day made their home there. It was to this city that there came in 1805 Franz Anton Weber, an uncle of the Constanze who had married Mozart, and with him his young son Carl Maria, who became later a well-known musician. Franz Anton Weber belonged to an old noble Austrian family who had been devoted to the stage and to music, and when his youngest son was born he made up his mind to have him trained as a musician. Carl Maria Weber (1786–1826) was a very delicate child ; he could not walk until he was four, and then only lamely. But before he could walk or read he began to learn music. His father, who had had an important position suitable to his noble rank, had lost both his post and his income before Carl Maria's birth, and now he toured from town to town with a travelling company of actors. His influence on his son was not good ; he was constantly in debt and constantly inciting his son when he was older to foolish and evil ways of living, though he was always made to compose and was given lessons at

the various places where they stayed. The regular musical instruction which would have been of real value to him he did not receive for many years. Indeed, at one time Weber's father made friends with Senefelder, then a starving poet who had just invented a new way of cheaply reproducing MS., a method which is now called lithography. Franz Anton Weber joined Senefelder in this work, and Carl Maria, who was then sixteen years old, was also taught to lithograph and worked with such interest that he made many improvements in the method. However, Franz Anton Weber and Senefelder quarrelled, and when a fresh tour brought the Webers to Vienna the father determined to again give his son music lessons. Instead of choosing one of the recognized teachers under whom Haydn and Beethoven had studied he chose a man called Abbé Vogler,[1] who was a great social success but was not a very talented composer. He became, however, very attached to young Weber and procured for him a post as conductor of an opera-house orchestra at Breslau. Weber did his work well; he became an excellent pianist, an inspired conductor and proved himself a really great musician. He had other appointments after Breslau, but wherever he lived he was followed by his unfortunate father, whose evil ways had a very bad effect on him, and who in the end stole a large sum of money belonging to the king in whose employment Weber then was. Weber took the blame on himself,

[1] Browning's "Abt Vogler."

but he lost his appointment. The shock of this exposure made him give up much of the excitement and pleasure which he had indulged in under his father's influence, and he settled down to hard work at his music.

It was soon after he had been appointed Director of German Opera at Dresden that Weber began his first famous opera, *Der Freischütz*; and it was while he was living in Dresden that he had one of the greatest happinesses of his life, his marriage to Caroline Brandt. His life at Dresden was very hard and not very happy. He had to rehearse and conduct all the German operas, to conduct what was called the table music while the King dined, to conduct in church twice each Sunday, to provide special compositions for festive occasions, and also to rehearse and conduct Italian operas if the other conductor had leave of absence. This would have been extremely hard work for a strong and healthy man, but for Weber, who was always delicate and with a tendency to consumption, it was killing.

He worked hard with his orchestra and singers and made them understand every note and produce finished and vivid performances. Sometimes he would have as many as sixteen rehearsals of a work, each of several hours, and the strain of listening to each note and going over part after part until each performer thoroughly understood the way it was to be produced must have been very great.

His appreciation of other musicians' music was sin-

cere. He chose and produced with the greatest care works he considered beautiful. Mozart was his idol, Beethoven's *Fidelio* he found full of beauty, and works by other less famous composers were given with great care and understanding under his direction. Work alone would not have been so exhausting to him, but Dresden was full of gossip and pettiness. The King was under the influence of one of his chamberlains whose sympathies were with Napoleon, and therefore against the new German spirit which was producing beautiful music and literature.

Weber had been much influenced a few years before in Berlin by the spirit there. It was the moment when patriotic Germans, knowing that Napoleon meant to use part of the German army against Russia, determined that it must be prevented at all costs, and secret societies were formed to unite Germans against Napoleon. Weber had felt something of the reality of this patriotism as opposed to the sordid life he was accustomed to with his father, and it had led him to write some German patriotic songs which are still sung by students, songs which then made him famous and are still some of the finest national melodies. The chamberlain of the King knew Weber's sympathies and was determined to oppose them. Insult after insult was offered him. His music was commanded and then not used and constant difficulties were put in his way.

We should not now expect to see a famous composer conduct music while a king had dinner, but it was part

of Weber's duty. He had to stand on a platform with the musicians, dressed in the Court dress, a cocked hat under his arm and sword trailing at his side, and conduct different pieces of music, one to the soup, one to the roast and so on, and then stand in silence while the royal family left the room.

His first famous opera, *Der Freischütz*, was produced not in Dresden but in Berlin, where he had many friends. Weber worked hard at the rehearsals and the theatre was filled to overflowing. All the famous people in Berlin were there, Heine the poet, E. T. A. Hoffmann the writer, Mendelssohn, then a boy, and many others were among the audience. The applause was extraordinary. The overture had to be repeated and there was an ovation at the end of each act. Afterwards all the singers, the famous literary men, and Weber's friends met and Hoffmann crowned him with a wreath of laurel. The rejoicings were not over till three in the morning. His reception in Dresden was, however, cold and even insulting. About seven years later he again obtained leave and went to Vienna to superintend the production of his next great opera, *Euryanthe*. Beethoven was then living a little outside Vienna and asked Weber to go and visit him. Weber drove out with two friends and found the great musician, his thick hair now grey and white and he himself in a desolate-looking room in the utmost disorder, music, coffee-cups, money, clothes, all strewn about and dusty. But Beethoven treated Weber with great

consideration, promised if he could to go to the performance of his new opera, and Weber wrote warmly in his diary of Beethoven's kindness.

Euryanthe was produced with great success, but after he left Vienna adverse criticisms appeared and Weber's delicate health suffered from hearing some of the unjust judgments on his work made by people who were envious of his position and genius. Meanwhile *Der Freischütz* was being a great success, and it was played in London at three theatres at the same time—Covent Garden, Drury Lane and the Lyceum—and Weber was asked if he would write an English opera. He was now so ill that he consulted with his doctor whether his health would allow him to travel to England and undergo the tremendous strain of rehearsals. When he understood that nothing but complete rest, no composing, no music, would give him a chance of life, and that only for a few years more, he bound the doctor to secrecy and accepted the English offer, determined if he could in the few remaining months of life to make some provision for his wife and children. He learned enough English to be able to write to English words and he travelled to England through Paris, where he had a triumph, for whenever he appeared in the opera house he was recognized and applauded. He landed at last in England, and driving from the coast to London went straight to the house of Sir George Smart in Great Portland Street. He conducted the rehearsals of his new opera, *Oberon*, he also visited people, among

others the Duchess of Kent with her daughter, afterwards Queen Victoria, who was then a child of seven. The Duchess sang Weber's songs while he played the accompaniment. The performance of *Oberon* was wonderful and Weber was called for at the end, a thing that had never happened to a composer in England before. However, Weber felt that he had come to England to make money and must give a concert and do anything else he could since he was too ill to hope to do much more for his family. He was very homesick and longed to be back in Dresden with his wife and children. The concert was not a financial success, and he was now so alarmingly ill that two doctors decided he must stop all public appearances. Weber, delighted to feel that he was now free to start home at once, refused to stay and rest ; he bought presents to take back and took farewell of all the people who had been kind to him and had helped to make his stay in England successful. He hoped to be home by the end of June. On June 5th he seemed very exhausted. Friends had come to say good-bye to him in Sir George Smart's house, and one offered to spend the night with him, but he refused. The next morning he was found lying peacefully ; he had died some hours before.

He was buried in London, but when later Wagner became Director of Music at Dresden he obtained permission for Weber's remains to be brought back to Dresden and the singers who had so often sung under Weber's direction sang over his grave.

To Wagner and the other great musicians who came after him Weber has always seemed an embodiment of what is best in the spirit of Germany of his time. When he lived, Italian opera was still the most admired and there was very little German opera. Weber knew that in Italian opera the secret was in the actual singing and in the wonderful and complicated arias which needed great vocal execution and skill. To the new German spirit such music lacked depth of feeling, and was not really dramatic, however perfect each song might be in itself. In German opera the serious and beautiful intent of the music as a whole was what mattered. When Weber lived a great literature was growing up in Germany. Heine, Hoffmann, Goethe were writing, and many others, and Weber was one of the first musicians who was a cultivated man, well read, and intellectually developed in other ways besides music. Though Weber's operas are his most important works and his genius lay mostly in his dramatic work, his originality in other ways is great. He did not carry on the old ideas, he invented new ones. He produced effects in piano playing which underlie the piano playing we now hear. The first German songs, " Lieder," as they are called, indeed all modern music for orchestra, opera, piano and voice, seems to have grown from the new sparkling, moving music that he wrote. Weber embodied the romantic spirit. The classical spirit which had lived in the old opera composers had been an aim at beauty, and a beauty perfect

in an almost impersonal way—perfectly balanced form, beautifully moving sound. But with the composers who followed Weber, the romantic composers as they are called, the aim changed. Music to them had to illustrate and enforce their feelings and emotions, and form was not of the first importance. We can see this in the overtures to Weber's operas. Mozart's and Gluck's overtures are each a perfect piece of orchestral music, not necessarily connected by melodies with anything that comes afterwards in the opera. They are just beautiful pieces of music fitted to introduce the opera that followed. Weber, however, used in his overtures parts of the melodies and effects that were to occur in the opera itself, and though the overture played by itself would not be a perfect complete piece of music with balanced form, it was a sort of vivid illustration of the opera that was coming and prepared people's minds for the sort of words and feelings they would subsequently have portrayed to them.

There was an element in Weber's music, and that of many composers after him, which seems to belong especially to the music of this time, and that was the expression of what we should describe as fanciful conceptions: music suitable for fairies and for magic of all kinds and for fantastic characters, human and otherwise. Such fanciful conceptions had appeared in isolated cases before but never to the same extent or with such importance. There was much of the same spirit in the literature of the day and it had a definite

effect on composers. Weber's music for these magic and fairylike conceptions is indeed imaginative and beautiful.

Weber will always be remembered for his three famous operas, his wonderful songs and his piano music, which has been played by all the great pianists since he lived. To-day we do not often hear his piano music, but it has inexhaustible brilliance and vividness, and his charming piece, "*Invitation à la danse*," is so melodious and gay that it is known to every one. The immediate and lasting success of his operas is due not only to the beautiful melodies, like folk-songs, with which they abound, but to the wonderful vividness with which Weber uses them and the brilliant effects he obtains from the instruments and orchestra for which he wrote.

It was partly during Weber's lifetime that there lived for some time in Italy, and later in Paris, a famous composer of Italian operas, Rossini (1792–1868). Rossini had wonderful natural gifts, among them an inexhaustible vein of melody. He wrote over forty operas, many of which contain much lovely music. It is, however, full of florid passages to which the singers of his day were accustomed and which gave them special opportunities to display their voices and powers. Rossini became so important and so powerful that he was able to stop singers putting in passages of their own, called "cadenzas." He had to write cadenzas for them, but these were part of the music and not just

passages of sound introduced by the performer whether suitable or not. In most of his operas Rossini wrote for the Italian taste of his time, a love of brilliant displays in singing and taking melodies, and such music is no longer so attractive as it was nor can singers sing in the same finished and wonderful manner. We still hear occasionally singers able to make great effects with the florid arias of this Italian opera, its trills and runs and brilliant passages and its gay melody, but we seldom hear operas of this kind performed.

Two of Rossini's operas, however, are still well known, *Il Barbiere* and *Guillaume Tell*. *Guillaume Tell* was the last and certainly the greatest work he produced. It has no excessive ornamentation like his earlier operas, but a dignity and simplicity worthy of its subject. It is a very beautiful work and deserves its fame as a great opera.

Rossini lived for forty years after he produced this beautiful work, but he wrote no more. Finding that the people of Paris for whom he was to compose his next operas were no longer interested in his work, but had become enthusiastic over the operas of another composer, Meyerbeer, he withdrew from his engagements, and *Guillaume Tell*, which showed such amazing new strength and beauty, remained his last work.

Two other composers of Italian opera of this time are still well known, Donizetti and Bellini.

Donizetti (1798–1848) was in his day a famous opera composer. He wrote for the best singers of his time

and his works were very popular. The only ones now heard and which still have gaiety and charm are his light operas *La Fille du Régiment*, *Don Pasquale* and some others. He had the power to pour out tuneful melody. Many of these melodies have their greatest popularity in the present day on barrel organs, for Donizetti wrote mostly for what he considered the popular taste of his day and his music, though always tuneful, was not always very valuable. Though his musical education was slight his natural powers were great and the operas that are still given contain much light charming music, full of melody, which is one of the most natural and enjoyable gifts of music.

Bellini (1801–1835) was a Sicilian. He began to compose when very young and his work was heard by the manager of two important theatres in Italy, the Scala at Milan and the San Carlo at Naples. He commissioned Bellini to write operas and the tenor songs in them were to be sung by the famous tenor singer Rubini. Italy was full of the florid music of Rossini when Bellini's music, just simple expressive melody, was produced. Its success was extraordinary. It was sung by the greatest singers all over Europe and delighted the audiences who heard it.

Bellini's work is unequal, but the lovely melodies in the operas of his that are still performed, *Norma*, *I Puritani* and *La Sonnambula*, appeal to everybody. No one can hear them without enjoying them.

One other opera composer contemporary with Weber

and Rossini must be mentioned : Meyerbeer (1791–1864). His real name was Jacob Meyer Beer, but after studying in Italy he changed his name to Giacomo Meyerbeer. He was a friend of Weber's when they studied together under Abbé Vogler, and he was the successor of Rossini in Paris, where his most successful operas, *Robert le Diable*, *Les Huguenots*, *Le Prophète* and *l'Africaine* were produced. Parts of these still make a dazzling effect, and though his music is regarded as over emphasized and melodramatic, parts are wonderfully effective. Meyerbeer was most exacting about the performance of his works. There was an interval of years between each opera while he rewrote and altered and was never satisfied—and the same occurred all through the lengthy rehearsals he demanded, passages were tried and rearranged until at last the public performance took place. His last opera, *l'Africaine*, was not produced in his lifetime, for his selection of suitable singers took so long and his alterations and corrections were still delaying the rehearsals when he died.

CHAPTER XVII

SCHUBERT

IT was in Vienna, so famous in the early nineteenth century as a centre of musical life, that Franz Schubert was born (1797–1828), and it was while he was at school there that some of Beethoven's most famous symphonies were produced.

Schubert was a most poetical musician and his life was his music. Other great composers had other means of earning their living and gaining public recognition besides composing. Bach was famous for his organ playing and earned his livelihood by public appointments to play, teach and conduct. Mozart was famous for his piano playing, Weber earned his living by conducting an opera orchestra, but Schubert did none of these things. He never performed in public, he never conducted a public orchestra and he never had any public position as a musician. He lived his life entirely to write music, and this beautiful music, now so famous, came purely from his own imagination. He had practically no teaching. Before he was eleven years old he learnt to play a little on the clavier and violin, and to sing in a choir, but the few teachers he had all thought him too gifted to teach, and he never received, while he was young, the help that older musicians could have given his genius. Each

musician has by study been helped to control his powers and make the best use of them, but such study Schubert never knew. His music was like a well of inspiration and it never ran dry. Directly he had finished one composition he began another.

It was his songs that first made Schubert well known, and his songs are still the best known of his works. No other musician has written so many inspiring melodies, such perfect music for the words they accompany. Schubert wrote to whatever words came his way. It seemed that whatever he read inspired him and he had to pour out music as a result.

He was always very poor. At the school for imperial choristers where his singing gained him admission when he was eleven, and where he stayed for six years, he could not even afford to buy music paper on which to write. When he left the choir school his only means of supporting himself was by teaching the youngest class in a public school. This daily drudgery saved him from conscription and enabled him to live, but it left him hardly any time for himself. In spite of these difficulties he wrote an enormous amount of music all the time. In one year in the intervals of teaching he produced an opera, two symphonies, two masses, a string quartet, three piano sonatas and other dramatic music, and one hundred and forty-six songs. Music was so completely the interest of his life that his industry never flagged. He went to bed in his spectacles so as to begin writing the moment he woke, and when

Franz Schubert

he was set free from school-teaching he wrote every morning from the time he woke till two o'clock, and the rest of the day he spent either seeing his friends or walking in the country gaining fresh inspiration for his art.

He was visiting a friend one day and was left alone in a room. Picking up a volume on the table, he became absorbed in the poems it contained and took it away with him. When the friend went next morning to recover his book he found Schubert had already set several of the songs to music and they are some of the songs now famous as the *Schöne Müllerin*.

One of his best-known songs was to Goethe's ballad *Erl König*. Spaun, a great friend of Schubert's, calling on him one day, found that he had just come across this poem of Goethe's. Reading it through two or three times had given him a vivid and overpowering inspiration and he was rushing down on to paper the melody and accompaniment he heard in his head. That night he and his friends sang and played it together.

Once he was walking with some friends through a village when they met another friend at a tavern. He had a volume of Shakespeare which Schubert picked up and began to read. As he read, "*Hark, hark, the lark*," a lovely melody came into his head. Some one drew some lines on a piece of paper for him and Schubert quickly wrote his well-known song. He wrote with great speed. Directly a poem took possession of

his imagination he seemed to see the music completely in front of him and could even chatter to friends while he wrote it out. Nothing stopped him writing, and directly he had some special inspiration he would miss meals rather than stop writing.

Beethoven and Schubert were contemporaries and fellow-townsmen, though they had little communication with each other. Schubert used to go to the same restaurant as Beethoven and admire him from a distance, for Beethoven was a very important person and Schubert quite unknown to the public. Beethoven also was very busy and very secluded owing to his deafness. However, when Schubert was twenty-five, and was beginning to make money by his compositions, he published a set of variations and dedicated them to Beethoven with warm words of admiration. He was taken by some friends to see Beethoven and give him this work and was received with great courtesy. But he was far too bashful to write any words with the pencil and paper provided for every one who wished to communicate with the deaf master. Though Beethoven was delighted with the music, Schubert's self-possession left him and he rushed from the room. However, in Beethoven's last illness his great friend Schindler put some of Schubert's songs into his hands. Beethoven was astounded when he heard that there were at least five hundred of these compositions. He pored over them for days, wondered how Schubert found time to produce such compositions, spoke of

him as having the divine fire in him and asked to see his other works. He spoke often of him, wishing he had known more of him, and prophesying much good of him. Schubert went twice to see him and Beethoven spoke of him with great affection, saying, " Franz has my soul." Schubert was quite overcome at the loss of the great master. He was a torch-bearer at Beethoven's funeral and afterwards became intimate with Schindler who had done everything to make Beethoven know his music. Schindler had many of Beethoven's papers, among them some poems which Beethoven had meant to set to music. Schubert took these and to thirteen of them he set music. They are now known as *Schwanengesang* and are some of the best songs he composed. They are also the last, for he lived only ten months longer. In those last months he produced some wonderful music, his last and greatest symphony in C, his quintet for strings (one of the finest works written for five string instruments), three piano sonatas, as well as beautiful music to religious words and other music all now known for its feeling, originality and affecting beauty.

No other musician lived such a simple and single-minded life as Schubert. He never travelled, his excursions were only into other parts of Austria. He wrote very few letters, he never gave a concert of his own works until the last few months of his life. He was once asked to whom he would dedicate a certain work and replied, " The work will be dedicated to no

one but those who like it : that is the most profitable dedication."

He was indeed so retiring that he would never have known fame during his lifetime if it had not been for his friends. When Schubert's first songs were written it was an unheard-of thing for songs to be sung at a public concert, but one of his friends succeeded in getting Vogt, a well-known singer, to come and look at some of Schubert's music. Vogt was so impressed by the way Schubert's music enhanced and sometimes even transcended the poetry to which he composed, that he began singing the songs at private houses where he was a welcome performer and thus began their fame.

Schubert welcomed any beautiful music he heard. His greatest admiration was for Mozart, and in his short diary he wrote : " Mozart, what countless consolatory images of a bright better world hast thou stamped on our souls."

He was able to afford himself a ticket to hear Paganini play when that great violinist visited Vienna, and he met Weber when *Euryanthe* was produced, but he shrank so from notice of any kind, even from praise, that his friends were simple people like himself with whom he could pass light-hearted hours walking in the country, making music, and having meals in restaurants in the simple convivial way so dear to all true Viennese. His uncontrolled outpouring of music resulted in his writing an enormous quantity ; over six hundred

songs, as well as symphonies, operas, piano sonatas, and in all over one thousand works. It is his songs that have made him universally beloved and universally famous. The dramatic power in some of his operas and the tender personal feeling in much of his music add to his fame, and two of his symphonies, one in C and an unfinished one in B♭, have such simple but imaginative beauty that they rank with the great and original symphonies of the world.

Friends, as we have seen, meant a great deal to Schubert. He was devoted to them and they to him, and the very rare occasions when he stayed away for a few months from Vienna were almost insupportable to him because it meant separation from his daily companions, while the happiest times of his life were the few weeks he sometimes spent in the summer walking in the country with a friend and visiting other friends.

But some helped him in other ways. They shared rooms with him and so helped him to live, and all his early friends made great efforts to have his music produced and make him known. It was owing to their exertions that Schubert gained recognition in the last years of his life and was able to earn money by his compositions. The money he thus earned would have been enough to support him and afford him the summer excursions so necessary to his health, but whenever he had money he shared it with anyone of the friends who surrounded him, and who, if unable to pay for their

own meals, were glad to eat at Schubert's expense. This kept him in constant poverty, and when the privations of his life and his excessive devotion to work began to tell on his health he often found himself unable to pay for meals for himself, or for his fare into the country. In 1828, when he was thirty-one, he was unable to afford the small sum which would have given him the summer outing which he much needed. No one seemed to realize how serious this was. He himself was full of plans for music and had been writing some of the best he ever wrote. The music he wrote in these last few months of his life is individual, full of new beauties of sound, delicate effects of harmony and imaginative orchestral combinations.

Only a few weeks before his death he came across Handel's oratorios, and was so impressed by them that he decided he would take lessons in counterpoint from the best teacher in Vienna, and even went to see him about it. But his weakness increased rapidly. His last letter was written to an old friend of his youth asking him to lend him books to read. He had read several books by Fenimore Cooper and wanted more of his works. He spent his last days in bed correcting proofs of his songs called *Winterreise* and making plans to write more music, but the end came suddenly.

His friends do not seem to have recognized his danger, but his elder brother, to whom he was devoted, was with him and cared for him to the end, even carrying out his wish that he should be buried near Beethoven.

CHAPTER XVIII

PAGANINI

PAGANINI (1784–1840). The word " virtuoso " is often applied to a musician who attains an unsurpassed brilliancy of technique in playing on an instrument, and the title was deserved by Paganini, who certainly was the most marvellous performer on the violin that has ever been known. With his extraordinary powers of playing he changed the outlook on violin-playing. He extended the capacity of the violin in unimagined ways, and gave other musicians a vision of the powers and brilliance of instrumental music that had not been known before. His playing left no one unmoved ; some applauded, some wept, and those who did not completely enjoy it could not but be aware of the sensation it produced and its marvellous if momentary beauty.

Paganini's appearance was unusual. He was very tall, very thin, his face waxen colour, and his long black hair fell on his shoulders. When he first came to England to play in 1831, people followed him in the street and even touched him to make sure that he was real.

His childhood had been a hard one, and his father's severity was such that he was punished for small faults by being deprived of food. This, with the hard work

he always did practising, ruined his health, and all his life he was subject to painful digestive illness. Anyone less devoted to his instrument might have been deterred by such harshness and such bodily weakness, but Paganini worked unceasingly until he had acquired his phenomenal certainty, and made his playing perfect in his own new way. After that he never practised.

In later life he played only his own compositions and these he seldom wrote down. He never took his violin from its case in his own room except to feel a few intervals with his fingers.

There must have been a magic in his playing, some strange vitality which subdued everybody who heard him. Once in Leghorn as he limped on to the platform with a sore heel the audience began to laugh. When the candles fell off his music-desk fresh laughter began, and when one of his strings broke the amusement became greater, but when Paganini continued playing on the remaining three strings, doing feats that no one had performed before, and some not even since, then came wild applause.

His playing was the outcome of his whole self. He lived lost in his own music. Sometimes he would pass the whole day sitting on a sofa in a room just hearing music in his head, and every evening he sat in the dark for some hours. Once in Italy he was seen lying out in a storm ; again one early morning he was found in the mountains playing wildly while the birds sang ; and one night in Florence a group of young people,

walking home to the music of a guitar, were astounded when an apparently mad figure rushed in among them, seized the guitar and played as none of them could play, dancing in front of them, then handed back the instrument and disappeared. It was Paganini who had felt moved to join their revelry and make it more exciting than they could.

He made large sums of money by his playing, but always lived simply. His luggage was an old battered trunk which carried his violin, his music and a few clothes. He ate and drank very little, and was content with any room, provided it was quiet.

He had several violins; one was a Stradivarius, but the one he loved best was made by Joseph Guarnerius. It was a gift to him. When first released from the severity of his home life, uneducated except in music, uncontrolled, and making a good deal of money by his playing, he took to gambling. He lost such sums that once he had to pawn the violin he then possessed, and he arrived in Leghorn to play without an instrument. A French merchant who owned a beautiful Guarnerius violin lent it to Paganini for the performance, and after the concert refused to take it back, saying his hands should not profane the violin Paganini had used. This violin remained Paganini's dearest possession. He died with it in his arms and his improvisation on it in the last hours of his life was the most marvellous music he produced.

Of all the music he composed, very little was pub-

lished, and though many violinists can now perform many of the feats he created, there are some that belong to him alone.

He was very generous to poorer artists and would play for any good cause and give to any who needed. He was devoted to his mother and his only son. He had friends in every country, among the best-known people of the day. For Byron he had a special admiration. He disliked being away from his own country, though when very ill he went to the South of France, hoping to get better, but he died at Nice in 1839. He left his violin to his native town of Genoa, where it is kept in a glass case in the museum, unplayed on since that most marvellous and almost legendary violinist touched its strings.

CHAPTER XIX

BERLIOZ

BEETHOVEN died in 1827, and it was during the last part of his life, the beginning of the nineteenth century, that a number of musicians were growing up who are all now famous. Berlioz, Chopin, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Liszt and Wagner were all born within ten years of each other, and each is now well known to all lovers of music.

The earliest of these, the greatest musician France has ever produced, was Hector Berlioz (1803–1869). The son of a country doctor, he was brought up with hardly any musical education and his pleasure in some of Gluck's music, which he found in his father's library, was regarded with disfavour by his family. His father and mother were each strongly opposed to his becoming a musician, and when the time came for him to study for a profession he was sent to Paris to learn medicine. His music came from his own passionate love of sound, the force of his imagination and his burning desire to produce in music, with all the beauty he could, the feelings that possessed him. Musicians naturally studied, and still study, as part of their training, harmony (the combining of sounds into masses) and counterpoint (the combining of melodies together). Of such studies Berlioz knew nothing until he was

nearly twenty, when he studied for a time at the Paris Conservatoire. In Berlioz' music the harmony and counterpoint are not the most interesting part. The power and originality of his music lie in his amazing understanding of the orchestra and his wonderful rhythmic sense. He understood the capacities of the different instruments better than the people who played them, and the certainty and clearness with which he combined their various sounds were entirely his own.

His life was a constant struggle with poverty and the difficulties of producing his works. He lived for months at a time on the simplest food, such as bread and raisins, saving all he could to pay for performances of his music. In order to make the small sum necessary for living he had to sing in an opera chorus, to give lessons and to write newspaper articles. When he produced his first works he spent sixteen hours a day copying the parts for the orchestra players. He had unusual difficulty over producing his works. For one thing he wrote for a very large number of players, sometimes for choir as well, and when such numbers of performers had to be paid for rehearsals and performance the cost was very great. Also the originality of his music was so startling that conductors of his time did not understand it. Only a few of the best musicians of the day were capable of appreciating it, and some of the well-known musicians in Paris hated his innovations and opposed him in every possible way. How-

ever, Berlioz' spirit was indomitable. If a performance went badly he would at once organize another, borrow money, find a hall and work with incredible energy until every performer completely understood what he had to perform, and then would come a triumphant success, for each time he produced his work, played as he meant it to be played, the effect was instantaneous, the audience was carried away and the players themselves were enthusiastic.

The strain, however, was great. The rehearsals were very hard work, and the performance once over Berlioz had to start again to earn by drudgery the money which enabled him to pay what he had borrowed and to live while he wrote new works.

Berlioz' continual efforts were not only in the cause of his own music. He also fought to get the works of others properly performed. He was one of the first musicians who not knowing Beethoven personally yet really understood him. When Beethoven's symphonies were played in Paris many alterations were made, conductors and editors saying that certain passages were ugly or not according to accepted rules. Such passages, played as Beethoven wrote them, are now considered original and moving, and Berlioz comprehended Beethoven's poetical power, and fought to have his works accurately and perfectly performed. When Berlioz won a prize at the Conservatoire he was entitled to a seat in the opera house at every performance. Here he did good work, for his love for the

operas of Gluck, Weber and other composers had led him to study and know their work intimately. When he heard performances with passages changed and instruments left out he would begin to make sarcastic and angry comments out loud. Other members of the audience were roused to interest, sometimes even to uproar, and the next time that particular opera was given there were no omissions or alterations.

With Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven the shape or form of a symphony, sonata and quartet was definite and in some ways fixed. The first movement or piece had a first theme, then a second theme, then a section where these themes were heard in different ways and the themes were repeated at the end. This made a symmetrical shape and such shape was used and expanded by these great composers. Among Beethoven's later works are several where the symmetry and shape give way and wonderful passages of sound occur like periods of transition and expectancy, music moving and uplifting and not depending in any way on shape or form, just pure sound moving according to some powerful feeling and conveying that feeling as we listen to it. Such music where the sound produced emotion without any regular return of the themes or any fixed shape, was rare in works for instruments. Bach had produced such instrumental music, so had Beethoven, but music of this kind was more usual in opera, where, interest being concentrated on the words

and actions of the story, the music had only to convey the emotions of the drama, and any fixed return of a theme was unnecessary and might have been quite out of place if a theme expressed a certain emotion and the story moved quickly on to other emotions and other situations.

Such music showed, however, that the special symmetrical shapes which had been developed for sonatas and symphonies were only, as it were, a mould into which composers had poured their feelings, and new shapes were developing independently of these special arrangements of the themes.

Just as in Berlioz' music his rhythms and use of instruments were quite original and an outcome of his powerful imagination and vivid feelings, so the shape of the pieces he wrote was his own. He once set the play *Romeo and Juliet* to music. He did not produce an opera as other musicians would have done, but he chose certain moments in the story which powerfully affected him and produced a piece of music for each of those moments, full of freshness, spontaneity and dramatic beauty. Moments that to other musicians might have been insignificant gave him the occasion for some lovely creation, as when Queen Mab is mentioned, just a passing comment on the story, but to Berlioz the occasion for a fairylike composition.

Berlioz' music is only now beginning to be well known and its great beauties recognized. His choice of subjects on which to write his music was unusual.

In *La Symphonie Fantastique* the five movements are called " Dreams and Passions," " The Ball," " Pastoral," " March to the Scaffold," and " Dream of a Witch's Orgy." The music to each is vivid and quite unlike the set movements of an ordinary symphony, but each is a piece of music with poetic intensity of expression.

If Berlioz' music was vivid, his life was no less so ; a life of many conflicts, of dramatic moments and of passionate devotion to his art and to the few people he loved. His conflicts were innumerable and were sometimes very amusing. Soon after he arrived in Paris he went to the Conservatoire library to read the scores of Gluck's operas. A " score " is music for orchestra, the part for each instrument being written out separately each below the other. Music so printed takes a great deal of space, copies are also usually very expensive and are generally only owned by libraries or wealthy musicians. Berlioz had not noticed that students were required to enter by a special door, and he had paid no attention to the porter who tried to stop him entering by the wrong door, so that he was surprised a short time afterwards by the principal, a well-known musician named Cherubini, who, enraged that a young man should ignore his rules, ordered the porter to turn him out. Berlioz would not submit to such treatment. He ran round the library, jumping over tables and chairs, chased by the porter and the angry Cherubini, and finally dashed out of the door

saying he would soon come back to study more scores, which indeed he did.

It was not the first nor the last of his conflicts. When he had obtained his father's permission to study music, and that only after great difficulty and misery, his mother left home and refused to see him again because she disapproved of such a career. Berlioz followed her to the house of a relation to which she had gone, but in vain, and he had to leave for Paris in the face of her antagonism.

The times when he wrote music were happy, but the times of performance were a continual struggle. First to collect enough performers, then to find that some were jealous of others, then that some were accustomed to their own conductor and would even make wilful mistakes rather than play for a new composer. There were constant pitfalls to be guarded against. Sometimes if he employed a copyist there were wrong notes to be corrected. Sometimes some meddlesome enemy would change the instruments as they lay ready for a performance and confusion would result. Even to get a hall was difficult, and after surmounting all these difficulties the concert might end in failure, but Berlioz' belief in his music never failed. If disaster happened he began all over again and with even greater efforts carried all to a successful conclusion.

Only once did he fail to do so. His wife was ill when a long new orchestral work came into his head. He foresaw the months of poverty while he arranged

for its performance and he felt sure that money needed by his wife would be spent on producing his new work if he wrote it. He refused to listen to his inspiration. Time after time the beautiful melodies and effects came to him, and time after time he refused to listen, and this work of his was never written.

Once, when a student, he saw Liszt standing in the audience clapping with enthusiasm. Once later in life, after a successful concert, he was in the artists' room prostrate with fatigue when Paganini entered, led him back to the hall and in the presence of the orchestra and those of the audience still applauding, knelt and kissed his hand. The day after this event Berlioz, really ill in bed, was visited by Paganini's son, who came with a note from his father giving Berlioz a large sum of money as a gift. It was a gift that set him free for some time from the worst of his daily cares, free to write music.

Berlioz was devoted to Paris and never happy away from it, though he had successful tours in Russia, Germany and England, and though he made money in other countries and not in his own. The greatest blow he ever had was the death of his son Louis, and from that he never recovered. He died in Paris in 1869.

The few works of Berlioz that are occasionally performed are orchestral, but he wrote several operas and the last, *Les Troyens*, which is in two parts and takes two evenings to perform, is full of noble and beauti-

ful music. It has very seldom been heard but it is music worthy of the famous stories it accompanies and worthy, too, of Berlioz' genius, which is only very slowly and gradually becoming known and appreciated as it deserves. The simplicity and grandeur, the passionate feeling and uplifted outlook in *Les Troyens*, and the clearness and certainty with which Berlioz wrote the effects and sounds he wanted, all these combine to make two very beautiful works which cannot easily be compared with other operas but which show extraordinary individual and epic beauty.

CHAPTER XX

MENDELSSOHN AND CHOPIN

SIX years later than Berlioz another now well-known composer was born, Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847). His life and circumstances and his work are a complete contrast to those of his French contemporary. Mendelssohn never knew poverty or any lasting unhappiness. He had every advantage that wealth and a cultivated happy home could give him, and he had great natural gifts. At the age of seventeen he wrote his octet (a work for eight string instruments) which shows wonderful understanding of the power and beauty of strings. Also at this early age he wrote his overture to the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, lovely, fresh, original, fairy-like music. He never wrote better music than this though he continued composing industriously all his life, and produced many other works still known and valued. His oratorio *Elijah* is very popular and full of melody. His shorter pianoforte works are finished and lovely, and his organ works very beautiful. He was indeed a very gifted, cultivated musician. In his light delicate music, such as his *Hebrides* overture, which expresses great feeling for the country, he has written really beautiful work.

His life except for music was uneventful. Brought up in Berlin in a large house where musical evenings

and afternoons were a regular part of daily life, and where all he composed even as a boy was performed, he grew up in a very cultivated atmosphere. He made friends wherever he went and knew all the famous people of the day, musicians, artists and literary men. He knew Goethe well and often stayed with him. England he often visited, and he always warmly appreciated the welcome English audiences gave him and their enthusiasm for his playing and compositions, for he was a wonderful pianoforte and organ player, and an excellent conductor.

The post he held which gave him most happiness was that of Director of the Gewandhaus concerts at Leipzig. There he worked hard producing works by the great musicians he revered, Bach, Beethoven, Mozart and Haydn. He welcomed any artist who came to Leipzig and helped their concerts. Here too he produced, after a hundred years of neglect, Bach's *Matthew Passion*, and so began that appreciation of Bach's music which led to the great edition of his works, the Bach Gesellschaft edition. Here also he started, with some other artists, the conservatoire for teaching music and himself worked there, enthusiastically teaching piano and composition.

Mendelssohn had a wonderful memory, always conducting by heart even long works like Bach's *Matthew Passion*. But he found arranging and conducting concerts a great strain on his highly-strung temperament, far more fatiguing than composing, and as years

went by he wished more and more to give up all outside activity and live a very quiet life, writing music and devoting his leisure to his own domestic circle.

His music seems to be the outcome of his happy life and cheerful nature. Full of melody, beautifully finished and the work of a most gifted personality, it never touches those depths of feeling that some other composers have sounded. The passion that lies beyond suffering was not a part of Mendelssohn's life, and it is lighter qualities we look for in his work and find in perfection. He is one of the great composers and has left noble and beautiful music, some full of imagination and all with finished beauty which came from his genius and character.

Very different was another composer born in the same year, François Frédéric Chopin (1809–1849). Chopin's short life was completely devoted to music in one form, music for the piano, the instrument which he himself played and which he treated in a most individual way. Each of his works is full of delicate beauties belonging peculiarly to himself. His lovely melodies have underlying them intricate and original harmonies, and are enhanced by beautiful cataracts of quick notes, sounding like an extension of the ornaments in old music which were like the embellishments suitable to a voice, and these passages of sound are constantly varied and extended and most suitable to the instrument for which they were written.

His short works, studies and preludes, are the most perfect. So great is their depth of feeling, so varied the emotions he expresses, and so finished and original their shape and style, that they are really greater than his longer works, sonatas and concertos, which have beautiful movements but not the same sustained intensity.

Other beautiful and well-known compositions are his nocturnes, ballades and scherzos, and those most characteristic of his nationality are his dances: polonaises, mazurkas and waltzes.

These last are the best known of all his works and are frequently played at concerts. Each waltz has an individual beauty and a touch of Chopin's genius, though not the depth of feeling to be found in some of his other works. But we hear in them something of Chopin's marvellous feeling for rhythm as well as his lovely moments of melody and his power of writing almost shimmering passages of sound. There is nothing of the ordinary waltz about these creations of Chopin's, no commonplace movement or sound. Each one has something new and vivid and arresting in quite different ways as if the possibilities of even such a simple dance, such a simple rhythm, were to him inexhaustible.

Chopin was a Pole. Brought up near Warsaw and present at many a country fête, where mazurkas were often danced, as well as at parties in noblemen's houses where the polonaise was always danced, he seemed filled

with the special spirit of these national dances. He had deep feeling for his country. He left Poland at the age of twenty-one and never returned, for Warsaw was taken by the Russians in 1830 and thereafter he made his home in Paris, but his heart was with his own people and it was in their spirit that he found inspiration.

In Chopin's youth the Polish nobles still retained something of their old splendour, partly Eastern in their love of dress and jewels and their hospitality, partly Western in their gallantry and chivalry. A ball in an aristocratic house was a wonderful display of colour and movement, and of the martial spirit and courtliness that characterized the Polish nobility. The polonaise was always danced. The host in a rich dress and ornamented cap, wearing rings and covered with jewels, led the principal lady at the head of a long line of dancers, each with his partner, through the decorated rooms and round the gardens to the sound of music with a stately measured rhythm. Whenever he waved his cap, threw back his furred mantle or made some graceful movement, the whole line of men behind him imitated him. Chopin's polonaises as well as conveying the stately rhythm of these gorgeous processions seem inspired by something of the grave courage and elegant courtesy that distinguished the dancers. Though similar in rhythm they are individual and different works.

The same can be said of the large number of mazurkas he wrote. The mazurka was a national dance

and was enjoyed by rich and poor alike. The couples improvised beautiful movements as well as combining in quick moving groups. Chopin wrote much lovely music for this dance.

The vigour, the vividness and the concentrated expression which Chopin conveys in his work expressed his inner life, but are a great contrast to his daily existence. His playing, though it won him fame, was too individual and too quiet to impress crowds. Indeed, he seldom gave concerts and preferred playing to a few chosen friends on a Pleyel piano in his own room. Heine, Liszt, Meyerbeer, George Sand and other artists and writers frequented his house and appreciated the delicate perfection of his playing and the hidden passion and intensity of his compositions, qualities which they met only in his music, never in their intercourse with him, for to his friends he gave only his gentle affectionate side, a courtesy and welcome that never failed. His playing never had the force suitable for large public concerts and he himself was not robust.

When he was twenty-seven he had his first alarming illness. George Sand took him to the island of Majorca and nursed him back to health. For years he stayed with her in Paris and at her country house, Nohant, but his health gradually declined. He visited London in 1848 and returned to Paris so ill that he died soon after. The Requiem of Mozart, the composer he most loved, was played at his funeral.

CHAPTER XXI

LISZT

THE year 1811 was the year of the great comet, and in the autumn of that year (October 22nd) Franz Liszt was born in a tiny Hungarian village, Raiding, where his father acted as steward for Prince Esterhazy, and consoled himself for his exile from any music but what he himself could produce by playing the piano every evening.

Franz Liszt was an only child and very delicate. He listened to his father's music and was taught the piano by him. The only other music he heard was gipsy music, for Raiding was lonely enough to have visits from bands of gipsies who in the evenings made wild passionate music, dancing and singing with a rhythm and fervour all their own. Whenever a band of gipsies came to Raiding Franz Liszt went to listen to their music, at least when he was well enough, for at times his feeble constitution gave way under the instruction he received from his father and the village curé, and once he was even given up for dead, and the village carpenter began to make his coffin.

Besides music he had one other great interest as a child, an intense love of stories of the saints. This feeling lasted throughout his life and was so strong that when his father died Liszt wished to become a

priest, and was only dissuaded by his confessor, who felt that his gifts for music should keep him in the world. Liszt's life was coloured by these early impressions, and as he grew older his feelings for a saintly life became stronger, yet at the same time he retained all his love for the gipsy dances he had heard in his youth performed in the open fields by the gipsies themselves, the men playing, the women with scarves and ribbons dancing and singing. They had made a vivid impression on Liszt when a sensitive child and he never forgot them.

After a successful concert at the near town of Eisenstadt when he was nine, he was taken by his father to Vienna and six Hungarian noblemen subscribed to pay for his further musical education. In Vienna Beethoven was living, and after one of Liszt's concerts, having heard him play and improvise, he mounted the platform and embraced him.

It was not until some years later that Liszt completely attained his full powers as a pianist. He lived for some time in Paris, working at music. There his father died when he was sixteen. He then had a nervous breakdown and spent many months in complete seclusion with his mother, who had come to Paris to live with him. After this, while living quietly and not playing at all in public, he began to work at his piano, playing in a way all his own. After these special studies, passages that to other pianists would have been difficult to him were easy. His playing was

like a creation, as if he were composing the piece as he played, and his mastery and insight made his performance a revelation to those who heard it. He never played the same work twice in the same way. If he was persuaded to repeat a piece he often felt it so differently from the way he had just played that his audience could hardly recognize the performance.

Liszt was still quite young when he attained a wonderful position. All over Europe he was known and admired. He could make enormous sums of money by playing and he often used his powers to raise money for charities, among others, for the people rendered homeless by the Danube floods in 1837 and for a monument to Beethoven in Bonn. Such a life as he led, playing frequently, travelling from town to town, everywhere welcomed as a pianist whose playing was like magic to his audiences, such a life would have seemed complete and almost intoxicating to most men. To Liszt it was only the apprenticeship to the work he felt he had to do, to compose music himself and to help other musicians whose work realized his ideals. At the age of thirty-five he gave up his career and retired to the little German town of Weimar to become conductor of the orchestra there.

He remained to the end of his life a pianist of such gifts his playing seemed unique to his hearers, but after he went to Weimar he never again played to make money for himself. His life thenceforward was

devoted to producing the work of other composers and composing himself.

Weimar, which had been famous when Goethe and Schiller lived there, now became famous again when Liszt produced year after year new operas and new orchestral works, many by men then unknown but destined to become well known, and whose earliest fame was due to his interest in their music and his efforts to produce it. His sympathies were wide and he gave as much effort to producing works by the great masters who preceded him as he did to gaining a hearing for new works. He it was who first revived Beethoven's ninth symphony, which was then neglected and misunderstood. Liszt felt that such a work demanded a far higher standard of performance than orchestras of his day ever gave. Differences of light and shade, beauties of phrasing and such details, were essential to a true performance, and he drilled his orchestra and chorus with such perseverance that wonderful results were attained, unthought of by ordinary conductors. He gave all Mozart's operas, works by Palestrina and Lasso, choosing compositions which he admired and felt he could recreate in performance.

People flocked from all over the world to Weimar for these performances, and composers like Berlioz and Wagner, then struggling against adverse circumstances, found themselves becoming known owing to Liszt's efforts.

Liszt had a great imagination for the possibilities

of new sounds. His friends were amazed at his liking to improvise on an out-of-tune piano when he came across one. To them the sounds of such an instrument would have been ugly and discordant, but they acknowledged that when Liszt experimented in this odd way he seemed able to show how such sounds could be turned to beautiful use, and his hearers enjoyed the strange new beauties he produced.

It was not only in sound that Liszt was a prophet of the future. He realized that music could not be tied to certain shapes and forms, and he found new freedom, letting it express poetical feelings without any of the old fixed design. No one can hear his orchestral work called *Orpheus* without feeling that a being with divine feeling appears, passes by and vanishes. And again, anyone who hears his work *Mazeppa* feels the tragic storm followed by calm and then rising again in triumph. The music, besides realizing the poetic conception of each of these heroes, also conveys vivid feelings of a definite and moving kind. Such a work is called a "symphonic poem," and the shape depends on the feeling to be expressed.

New combinations of sound, new successions of sounds, new shapes, new ethereal feelings expressed in sound, all these we owe to Liszt. The greatest of his contemporaries, Berlioz and Wagner, knew this, and all who came after Liszt owe him something. Wagner acknowledged how much he owed to Liszt's music, as well as to his generosity and friendship.

The most famous of Liszt's works are his *Faust* symphony, his *Dante* symphony, his symphonic poems, and his sacred works, *Saint Elizabeth* and *Christus*. These were almost all written during the twelve years he spent at Weimar. There at a house on the Altenburg he had several rooms for working and playing. In one stood three pianos, one of them the piano that had belonged to Mozart. In another were more pianos; one was a Broadwood which had belonged to Beethoven and which was the last on which he had played before his death. Liszt himself preferred playing on an Erard, and had several Erard pianos in the house. He only used Mozart's and Beethoven's pianos on some special occasions.

During these years he devoted the mornings to his own writing, but the rest of the day he was surrounded by pupils and musicians, or else he was conducting. New works such as Wagner's operas then seemed unintelligible until Liszt's patience and teaching made the players understand exactly what the music meant and how it was to be performed.

Great musicians have always been able to recognize greatness in others and welcome it, but no musician has shown greater generosity of feeling than Liszt. He was unmindful of the success of his own work provided he could help forward the work of other musicians whose music he considered worthy. Time has proved how right was his choice of what was good. The list of works he produced at Weimar contains

names that have almost all become famous and all of which have original beauty. Ten years before Berlin or any other German town would produce the operas of Wagner, Liszt was making some of them well known at Weimar. He had worked hard, too, at making Beethoven's music well known, and some years before, when Beethoven died and his works were much disliked in Paris, Liszt insisted on playing his concertos and sonatas there until he won for them the regard and esteem we now give as a matter of course.

Contemporaries who heard Liszt said it was impossible to describe his playing. Schumann's wife, herself a famous pianist, wrote with wonder to Schumann of Liszt's performance when she first heard him, and his powers were unimpaired to the end of his life. In 1886 he came to England and played. His fame was so great that it was like a legend. As the audience waited in the hall they heard a roar coming along the street. It was waiting crowds applauding as Liszt passed, on his way to the hall to play.

Later in life Liszt joined the order of St. Francis of Assisi. He was sometimes called Abbé Liszt, but his vows left him free to marry and live as he liked in the world ; only binding him to certain religious observances which had always been dear to him.

The last years of his life he divided his time between Buda Pesth, Weimar and Rome, spending a few months in each and occasionally visiting Bayreuth, where his daughter Cosima lived, for she was Wag-

ner's second wife. It was at Bayreuth that he died of weakness on July 19th, 1886.

Liszt's orchestral works and his great powers as a pianist are not his only claims to fame. All his life he wrote works for the piano which extend the powers of the instrument and which are full of originality. His one sonata has passages of great beauty with new and unexpected sounds. The shape is not like what is usually called a sonata, for it is all in one long movement. His *Années de Pélérinage* are books of pieces, some of the later ones so simple that only a great artist can play them with sufficient insight to create again the feeling with which Liszt wrote them. His transcriptions of songs and parts of operas are like a commentary on the music and add to our understanding of the works he chose to transcribe.

Much of Liszt's music is still too little known. He wrote over a thousand pieces for the piano, and some of the most beautiful are seldom played, while the works that are played in public are often those that are very difficult to the ordinary pianist, so that they are apt to give an impression of difficulty rather than of beauty. This is because these works need a performer of attainments like Liszt himself so that the difficulties seem easy and become only part of the poetical feeling that is being expressed. The beautiful orchestral works of Liszt, too, are not often performed. His *Faust* symphony, *Dante* symphony and symphonic poems are all full of individual beauties, clear and lovely

effects of sound making definitely beautiful impressions.

But though it is not possible often to hear Liszt's works performed, it is possible to know a good deal of his life and his generosity of character. Incapable of petty feelings or of jealousy, he worked for all he thought worthy in music, both old and new, undeterred by ill-feeling on the part of those who should have appreciated his efforts, and not troubling whether his own work was produced. His life was full and vivid. During his years in Paris he was on terms of intimacy with Chopin, George Sand, Heine and many other famous artists and writers. In Weimar his house was open to people of all classes and every nation. Wagner and Berlioz were his great friends, while his powers and his personality attracted people of all degrees and assured him an enthusiastic welcome wherever he went. He gave his powers and his position to the service of ideals in art for which he worked unceasingly.

CHAPTER XXII

WAGNER

IF we do not know intimately a large part of the works of Bach and Mozart, the same cannot be said of Richard Wagner (1813–1883), who was a reformer in one branch of music, the opera, and whose operas are so often performed, and parts of them played at concerts, that probably every one has heard a good deal of his music.

Wagner was an amazing personality. He had a most emotional nature and extraordinary energy. While a boy he was very interested in drama. He translated Greek plays, read Shakespeare and even wrote plays himself. For some years his mother lived in Dresden and he often watched Weber, whom he greatly admired, walking past the house on his way to the theatre. He was not, however, specially interested in music until he heard some of Beethoven's works in Leipzig. He at once felt he must write music like that to one of his plays, and bought a book on theory with a view to doing so. He had very little serious musical education. For a few months only he worked with Weinlig, the cantor of the Thomas Schule in Leipzig, but his interest in the music he liked was so real that he acquired for himself an intimate knowledge of Beethoven's and Mozart's works and those of other

composers that roused his admiration. He also wrote several works in the classical manner and became by his own efforts a very cultivated musician.

As a young man he held several appointments as chorus master and conductor at various opera houses. His family was very poor and he had married while quite young, so his circumstances were not prosperous ; but he hated the limitations he found round him, the difficulty of producing anything new, the lack of understanding of all that was not well-known or light and entertaining, and at last the conditions of his life roused him to a special effort to get away by his work from the constant petty worries that surrounded him. He had written two operas and began to feel his powers, and he now set to work on his first successful opera, *Rienzi*.

But before *Rienzi* was finished he passed through a time of great poverty and difficulty. With very little money he set sail from Riga to London with his wife and a large Newfoundland dog. The voyage was a terrible one. Delayed by furious storms the ship took three and a half weeks on its short journey, and so appalling was the weather that it made an impression on Wagner he never forgot. He stayed only two days in London and went on to Paris. He met Meyerbeer, Berlioz and other composers, but they gave him no practical help, and to provide daily bread he had to make arrangements of all sorts of music and write articles for newspapers. His nature had always been open to impres-

sions and vivid in his expression of them, and now he rose in revolt against all that seemed to him second-rate and mediocre in art in Paris, and the almost complete lack of sympathy that greeted anything not written according to the prevailing taste.

When *Rienzi* was completed and was to be produced at Dresden he returned there. This opera had a great success. Wagner had started out to write an opera on a grand scale; he had chosen a subject he liked, had written in the style most popular at the time, and had succeeded completely. The management of the opera house at once offered to produce another of his operas.

While in Paris he had written another opera, *The Flying Dutchman*. This work was based on a legend which had long interested him and it had become so vivid to him after his stormy voyage from Riga and his painful life of poverty and uncongenial work in Paris that his whole self was absorbed in writing it. The figure of the Flying Dutchman was to him an image of that longing common to him and his fellow-men, an intense wish for rest amid the turmoil of everyday life. Something of the bitter realities of his own life with its hard work and loneliness, and his instinctive sympathy with the story, impelled him to write this opera. He imagined Senta, the maiden whose devotion was to release the Flying Dutchman from his tragedy of restless, ceaseless wandering and give him the peace he longed for, and so vividly did he feel the scenes where

she first appears in the story that in writing the music for them he found as it were the whole opera.

For Wagner wrote *The Flying Dutchman* with a new outlook. It was the first work on the lines on which he afterwards produced all his greatest works. It was produced in Dresden, but had a most chilling reception. A few people admired and liked it very much, but the executants and many of the audience were puzzled and bewildered by the music, much of which lacked the definite rhythms and melodies that they were accustomed to. This music was written in a way Wagner had not used before. His early operas had been written in the ordinary manner with definite songs, duets, trios at some definite moment of the story. Now, however, each mood, each person, each natural phenomenon such as water, light, etc., had its special music, music that belonged to that character or object throughout the work, and only varied as the mood of the characters varied, or circumstances threw a new light on it. In this way if he wrote one scene of an opera he had in that scene the germ of much of the music of the whole opera. Each character having its own theme, each natural object its melody, and each idea of love or hatred or such feelings its own distinctive music, the music for other scenes in so far as these characters were concerned now existed. It might be combined with the music of new characters and varied in relation to the moods and underlying feelings of the story, but it was never entirely new music, the newness came from the

combinations of existing themes, or new characters and feelings as they entered. This was quite unlike the old way an opera was written when one character might sing several songs, perhaps all of them happy or all of them sad, but the music to each entirely different. In Wagner's method the music for any one character in any one mood would be largely the same throughout, being made up from the melodies which expressed to him that character and mood.

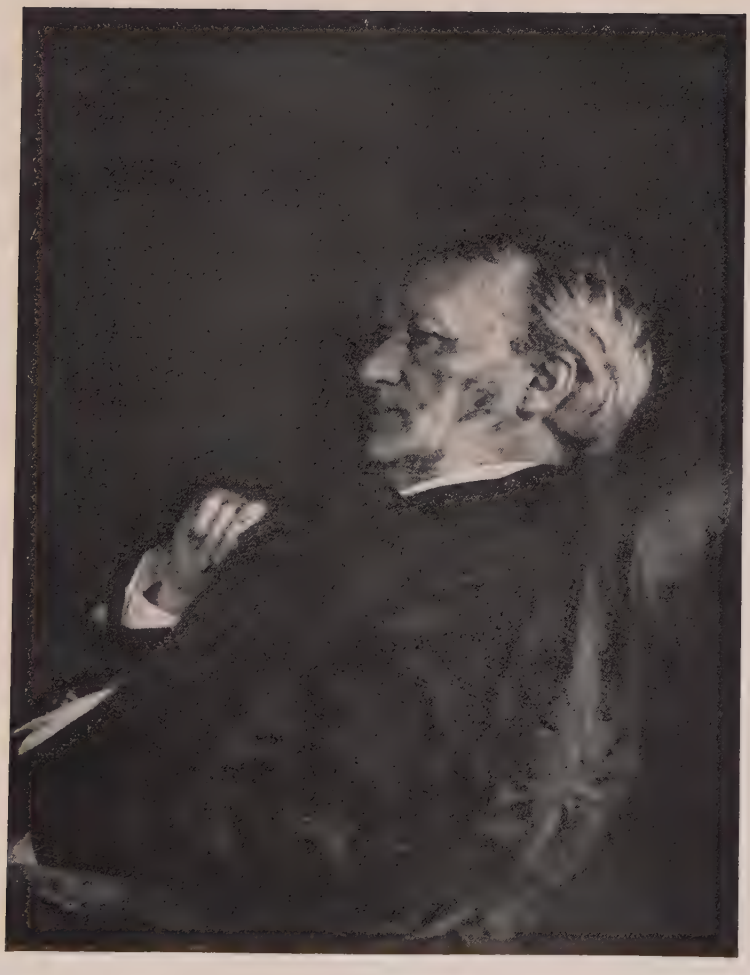
In this way the music gained a new kind of interest, and instead of the story waiting as it were while a character sang a song which the audience listened to just as a beautiful piece of music, Wagner contrived that any pause in the story should be utilized for music which could produce in its sounds the moods and feelings underlying the story at that particular moment, and could thus emphasize the inner feelings of the characters and the inner meaning of the dramatic situation. In this way themes which belonged to characters not seen at that moment on the stage could be introduced, bringing to mind various elements in plot and characters, filling out the substance of the scene and enriching the meaning of what was going on.

Wagner did not perfect this method of writing music at once. Themes had been used in this way by other composers but never to the same extent. This method had an effect on the whole music of the opera. In Wagner's method a beautiful song was only allowed to occur at any moment when a person or chorus would

actually sing a song, as for example when the maidens round Senta sing a spinning song as they spin ; while the rest of the music was a tissue of interwoven melodies, changing with the characters and scenes. Even the recitative belonged more closely to the rest of the music and became fixed. Wagner wrote it in definite time, not to be sung according to the singer's feelings but strictly in time with the accompanying music.

Thus music in Wagner's hands became a new and wonderful counterpoint, so melodious and clear that it does not necessarily strike an inexperienced listener at a first hearing as counterpoint, but counterpoint it is, forming a rich texture of melodious sound, rising to great beauties and at times to great nobility of feeling.

After the production of *The Flying Dutchman* Wagner accepted the post of conductor at the Court theatre at Dresden. He was very doubtful whether he ought to do so. His ideas of what music was worth producing were very different from those of the officials who really managed the theatre, and Wagner now knew enough of the way opera houses were conducted to realize how his wish to produce beautiful works and new interesting operas would be entirely opposed to the accepted policy of producing works which did not need much rehearsal and would be so popular they would be sure to pay. However, to accept the appointment meant an income and perhaps a better chance of getting his own works performed, so he took the post and worked hard at the many duties attached to it.



Richard Wagner

It was a time when there was much interest taken in Germany in mediæval German literature, and much of it was being printed. Wagner read all that he could and became more and more interested in those versions of the old stories which were most primitive and mythical. Later in life he realized how his instinctive feeling had responded to the ideas contained in those old legends, ideas that became gradually vivid to him as he realized in his own feelings and in his own life the reality underlying Folk myths. For Wagner it was not enough to be interested in a story. It was only as he found things in his own daily life and feeling that corresponded with the story that he gained the power to make the legend his own and reproduce it with all the force of his own emotions, longings, disappointments, perceptions and attainments.

His new method of writing music became more perfect in his next opera, *Tannhäuser*, the story of which was also founded upon a legend. He wrote this opera with passionate intensity. The story conveyed to him the compelling desire to find in an uplifting love release from the purely sensuous pleasures and materialistic aims which was all, as it seemed to him, present-day art and life had to offer. He thought much of the art of his own time was second-rate. It was produced to amuse and distract an audience whose daily life was passed in an exhausting pursuit of money. He believed that in every human being there lay the desire to make the things of everyday life beautiful, and in so far

as they could do this, each person would become capable of producing artistic and lovely things, and of responding to something greater than what was merely entertaining. It seemed to him that a life wrongly lived left no power to enjoy any but purely sensuous things, was robbed of its natural joy, and that in such a life art was treated with a levity that made it unreal. Such wrong lives were lived both by the poor who worked for nothing but to make a living, and also by the rich who worked to increase their wealth for no worthy aim. Wagner felt that the hero of his new opera *Tannhäuser* sought for something nobler, something more satisfying, something that the best in himself could strive for and attain.

The idea or aim that Wagner thus wished to convey in some of his operas is not the important part of his work, for it is not the " message " of a musical composition that matters, only the fact that it is lovely music, and induces a corresponding state of mind in its hearers. But the interest of these stories is very real, they embody the Germanic spirit which to Wagner was so sympathetic that it inspired him to write beautiful music, much of which is complete in itself. It can be played quite apart from the stage and is moving and convincing in its own way.

It was while reading the Tannhäuser legends that he came across the story of Lohengrin, which became the subject of his next opera. Again he had to grow into this story. It attracted him, but only slightly. As,

however, he thought of it and the less primitive details of the version he had read fell away, he began to feel with absorbing force the tragedy of Lohengrin's nature. Again it expressed something that he found not only in himself but in others around him, the longing to be understood and trusted, that longing common to all who feel ; not to be admired nor appreciated, but to meet warmth of feeling, something so real and alive in an actual person that all that is trivial and petty in daily life loses its power to harm.

Wagner felt the lack of success, for since he had written music in his new way he had had great difficulty in getting his works performed, and they were not popular. His operas, or music dramas as he preferred to call them, brought him appreciation from individuals but very little prospect of frequent performance, for managers were not prepared to produce new works which were so difficult to perform that they required enormous numbers of rehearsals, and so difficult for the ordinary listener of that time to appreciate that performances would probably not bring in enough money to pay for the cost of production. Wagner felt his work was not understood and he began to try in words to explain his aims and feelings. He thought out his conception of art and life, and of drama as the art most in touch with life, and in these long works of explanation and description he makes his readers feel vividly the passionate intensity with which he felt and wrote. There have been many men and women of strong feel-

ing who have longed to make others see and feel with a sympathy as great as their own, and no one has more longed to do this than Wagner.

Several times in Wagner's life he became interested in historical characters and began to work on music dramas dealing with such characters, but he realized each time that that was not what he wanted to do. What really appealed to him was man—man with primitive instinctive longings and desires, and ideas so universal that they could be found expressed in old poetic legends and even more vividly in himself and men around him—man who felt in himself the power of greater beauty and joy and could see the baffling force of wrong aims and wrong conditions.

To Wagner an historical personage could never have the same vivid power, because he could express so little of the universal feelings and truths that must have been his in common with his fellows. So much of the life of any historical person is a fight with outward circumstances, so little the unfettered expression of what he really was and wanted to be. The old legends whose origin was hidden in obscurity had truths so profound that each age lived them again in the dress of present conditions.

It was natural that a man like Wagner, who lived vividly in the present and had such human sympathy, should express himself not only in drama but in life. The revolution in Poland while he was a youth roused his feelings, but not to any action. The revolution in

Germany, however, made him long that those who held political power should understand what forces they were suppressing, forces which were bound to revolt and make for better conditions, for they were inherent in human nature. He felt that if those in power could understand, reforms could be made which would do away with the necessity for revolution, and he drew up a manifesto explaining how this could have a good effect on the art with which he was most concerned. The expression of these sympathies was regarded with disfavour by the authorities in Dresden, and warned that he was to be arrested on political grounds he fled from Germany. For twelve years he was an exile, longing all the time to be able to return to the only country to which he felt he belonged.

It was during these years of exile that he began his longest work, the *Nibelungen Ring*. In this work, which consists of three music dramas and an introduction and takes four evenings to perform, Wagner took the various legends that circle round the mythical hero Siegfried and combined them into a version of his own, worthy of a place among the older versions, and which while keeping the ethical ideas underlying the story also satisfied Wagner's own philosophic feeling. In these operas he produced some of the most lovely music he ever wrote and some of the most noble. The idea of the hero Siegfried inspired him. Siegfried, who knew no fear, who was greater than the gods, for he suffered none of the consequences of love of power

or love of gold and was free from any law except his own beneficent vitality, this was a hero after Wagner's own heart.

Wagner insists many times in his writings on the way the music for his dramas came to him, how when he felt the story as an actual happening in his own life and life round him, he became absorbed and felt the music for each idea, each person and each mood in the drama. It is this actual present and living reality that each listener must feel if he is to listen to the *Nibelungen Ring* without finding long rather dreary tracts of sound. Parts there are, and long parts too, that are just delicious music, and parts so uplifted and complete in themselves that words and actions do not seem to matter. But there are passages of soliloquy and conversation which are only understood when the listener feels with the composer the special meaning of the personages of the drama.

Wagner himself never felt that the *Nibelungen Ring* was a story of giants, dwarfs and gods who were apart from our daily life. They were embodiments of forces that exist in daily life. For instance, Alberich was to him the embodiment of men who revolted him by the way their lives were lived, uninterested in anything but their daily work of making money, caring nothing for the hardships of those whose work produced the money they lived for, and using their wealth to perpetuate and encourage not the best, most beautiful things but those which copied, even in an inferior way,

the things they were accustomed to. Such were the people who disguised from themselves and others the hideousness of what they really were and what they stood for. Wagner felt all this with horror, and it is only in sharing this feeling of the terror of evil forces among men that we can appreciate the music that Wagner writes for such a character as Alberich. Its gloom is then not something outside ourselves which we would rather not listen to, but an experience of something real which, however unpleasant, does exist, and in contrast to which the music of the light-hearted Rhine maidens and the lovely sounds that convey his feeling for water, trees and other natural objects in the scenery, are all the more entrancing.

So though it is possible to enjoy much of the music of Wagner's operas just as pure music conveying its own message, there are long passages where it is essential to understand the story and what is embodied in the characters before we can appreciate the moods and feelings that make the sounds. The origin of Siegfried, who embodies the vision of what man should be and yet is not, the forces he overcomes, the natural beauties that form the background of his life, the tragic end with yet a hope that life which produced him will produce yet greater men, all is expressed in that long and vivid work the *Nibelungen Ring*.

But these legends which meant so much to Wagner were after all only the stimulus to the one thing of real value he gave the world, his music. People may dislike

some of the things he wished to express, but no one who likes music can fail to enjoy a large part of what Wagner wrote. His lovely melodies, the lovely sounds with which he expresses natural beauties, the nobility and uplifted feeling of *Götterdämmerung*, much of the music of his last opera, *Parsifal*, all these and many other beauties find a sure welcome.

Wagner himself regarded music as his guardian angel. Music was to him the only true art of the present and the future. The drama might inspire him but it was in music that his power lay. Music was to him so lovely that it saved him from the bitterness a nature like his might have felt overwhelmingly as an outcome of the painful circumstances of his life.

After he fled from Dresden for fear of arrest he had no prospects. He felt a sense of relief at being completely free from his position as a Court official, but he was without money, with no hope that any operas he wrote would be produced and home-sick for the one country he loved. On his way to France he stayed for a few days at Weimar with Liszt. At their first meeting in Paris he had disliked Liszt; later Liszt's efforts to show his appreciation of Wagner's work had brought them together, and now when Wagner was flying from Germany he heard Liszt rehearse *Tannhäuser* with such sympathy that he felt Liszt had found in the written music the actual feelings he had had when he wrote, and he had not imagined anyone being able to do this. It meant everything to Wagner, and for the next

years of his life he leant on Liszt, who helped him in every possible way. Letters of encouragement, money, productions of his works with great attention to detail, and all the inspiration that Liszt could give, all this was at Wagner's disposal. It was Liszt's production of *Lohengrin* at Weimar in 1850 that began Wagner's world-wide fame. It made him known, admired and even reverenced. But even such help as Liszt's would not have provided the large sums of money which were required before the later operas could be produced. But he had opened the way to Wagner's operas becoming famous, and one great and powerful admirer of them was Prince Ludwig, who in 1864 became King of Bavaria.

This year found Wagner at a very difficult time in his life. He was almost without money. Some of his operas were becoming well known and were being played in many German towns, but such small sums were paid for the right of performance that he could not live on the proceeds. It seemed impossible to him to continue writing with no means of living while he did so, and no prospect of having the works produced when they were finished. At this dark moment a messenger came from the new King Ludwig inviting Wagner to Munich and offering to provide him with a home and means to produce his works. Though in the end jealousies and difficulties obliged him to leave Munich, it was King Ludwig's help which enabled him to complete his life's work. His opera *Tristan*

and his one comic opera *Meistersinger* were both produced at Munich, and at last a special theatre was built at Bayreuth for the production of his long new operas under the best conditions that he himself could devise. Friends helped him carry out his ideas, among them Richter, well known in England as a conductor some years ago, but in Wagner's lifetime a young man. The *Nibelungen Ring* was first given at Bayreuth in 1876, and in 1882 his last opera *Parsifal*.

Wagner himself spent some time each day with the music of others which he especially loved and admired. Mozart's operas and symphonies, Bach's well-tempered clavichord, Weber's operas, Beethoven's quartets, sonatas and symphonies, these were his favourites. He knew also the works of Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Palestrina and Chopin, and he studied much of Liszt's and Berlioz' music.

His life begun, and continued, most of it, in extreme poverty, ended in comfort, and in world-wide recognition and appreciation. In 1865 he settled at Triebschen, near Lucerne. Here he lived in beautiful surroundings, friends with the writer Nietzsche, many people coming from all over the world to see him and he working hard all the time. He had at last a life he really liked. Here he married Liszt's daughter Cosima, and when they moved to Bayreuth in 1872 it was to another country home and the quiet life he so much enjoyed.

He had worked with great energy all his life. This

at last had an effect on his heart and obliged him to avoid excitement and strain. For several winters he went to Italy for his health, once to Palermo and once to Venice where he died very suddenly.

Wagner is one of the few musicians who really understood the orchestra. A later musician has said that the orchestra is one great instrument so full of possibilities in sound that few composers have comprehended it. Many who write for orchestra simply compose music and then arrange it as it will sound best for the various instruments; but the few great orchestral writers, and Wagner was one, hear the music they compose with the sounds and effects of the different instruments from the start. It is such composers alone who enlarge the possibilities of orchestral sound and effect.

CHAPTER XXIII

VERDI

CONTEMPORARY with Wagner was another great composer of operas, Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901). Like Wagner he learnt much from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, for Wagner admired this opera above all others and Verdi, at the age of eighteen was given it as a daily study by his master.

To appreciate and fully enjoy a great opera is not purely a pastime. Only by degrees can a listener hear the various beauties, and the less obvious ones probably last of all.

At a first hearing of Mozart's masterpiece, *Don Giovanni*, the listener probably most enjoys the few clear melodies such as "*La ci darem la mano*," and perhaps something of the light humour of Leporello, which seems to add a depth of simple sincerity to the whole work. It is not until one is fully acquainted with the music that one can follow all through the recitative with its quick-moving emotion and realize the delineation of the characters and the moments of pure melody coming, as it were, from a background of equally passionate and moving though less easily remembered music.

Verdi wrote many operas, the earlier ones less gifted but with far more obvious melodies though less closely

compact than his later works. In his earliest works it is indeed the melodies that matter and almost nothing else. As Verdi's powers grew his work grew in interest, and not only beautiful melodies but other lovely effects of feeling bind together his later operas, such as *Rigoletto*, until in *Falstaff* we reach an opera where the melodies and solos are not so important as the character of the persons of the opera as they are displayed in the music and the quick-moving scenes of humour and delicacy.

Verdi was one of the great Italians who lived under Austrian tyranny, and though he did not suffer from it politically it affected his work. The police sometimes interfered and refused to allow his operas to be produced, and sometimes his librettos had to be changed. The authorities tried to prevent any occasion for outbursts of Italian patriotism, but Verdi in his works wrote stirring popular melodies to words which woke patriotic fervour in his hearers, and many were the scenes in Milan and Venice when, after a great aria containing such suggestive words as " Cara Patria," " resti l'Italia a me," the audience became almost frenzied with excitement ; the applause developed into a roar and every portable thing, papers, hats, books, flowers, fans and even sticks, were thrown from one part of the house to another. For ten years in that time of struggle Verdi was a national force. Even his name was a watchword, and " viva Verdi " shouted by an audience and placarded in the streets stood in the

minds of Italian patriots for " Viva *V*ictor *E*mmanuel *R*e *D'I*talia," the King to whom their hearts turned to unite their country and drive out the hated Austrians.

The story of Verdi's early life is moving and interesting. He was the son of poor parents who kept a little shop at a village called Roncole, near Busseto, and not far from Parma in Northern Italy. Very little money was spent on his education. His parents noticed that whenever a barrel-organ came to their town the little Verdi followed it as far as he could to listen to the tunes. While he was still young they obtained a spinet on which he picked out scales and chords, and such was his passion one day at being unable to find again a chord he had sounded with pleasure the day before that he took a hammer and began breaking the spinet. The same spinet stood in a room of the villa where he died, and written inside is an inscription from an old workman who had mended it for love and not for pay because the boy played so well.

When ten years old, Verdi became the organist at Roncole while he was being taught simple lessons at the neighbouring town of Busseto for threepence a day. Busseto took a pride in Verdi. A leading citizen, Barezzi, employed him, and later on he married Barezzi's daughter. The charitable funds of the town provided money for him to go and study in Milan, and the townspeople brought him back when their organist died, to conduct their Philharmonic Society.

After five years Verdi returned to Milan, this time with his wife. There he lived very simply with his family, a baby son and daughter, and there he obtained a commission to write three operas, the work he most wanted to do. But, while writing, the great tragedy of his life happened. In just over two months his two children and his wife were taken ill and died, and his home was left empty. The opera, for which a comic libretto had been given him, was a failure and Verdi wished to tear up his agreement and never write again. The conductor who had given him the commission met him, however, one day and asked him to read a libretto he had which he considered poetical and beautiful, the story of Nebuchadnezzar. Almost against his will Verdi read short passages of the story and, moved by the beauty of the words, began slowly to write. The opera was produced during carnival and was his first great success.

Verdi always lived retired from the world. He bought a little villa near Busseto, where he lived very quietly. Honours were showered on him in his later years. He was offered a title when Italian freedom came, but he refused it. Cavour made him accept a place as member of parliament. Later the King made him a member of the senate, but Verdi never used his position in either capacity. He attended once, and that was all. He married again, a famous singer, Madame Strepponi, but had no more children. He composed constantly. He wrote nearly thirty operas

as well as his famous Requiem, and a few other religious and instrumental works which are now not heard.

The most famous of his operas which are still often given are *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata*, *Il Trovatore*, *Aïda*, *Otello* and *Falstaff*. *Rigoletto* was an adaption of a story by Victor Hugo called "*Le Roi s'amuse*." *Aïda* was commissioned by the Khedive of Egypt to inaugurate the new Italian Theatre at Cairo. Verdi was paid £4,000 for the opera, which was produced in Cairo in 1871.

The melodies in many of his operas, particularly *Il Trovatore*, were so popular that they travelled all over the world on barrel-organs. One melody in *Rigoletto*, "La donna e mobile," Verdi himself thought so likely to attract popular applause that he did not even write it down until a few hours before the opera was produced. Such melodies brought Verdi money and fame, but this alone would not have made him what he was, one of the greatest writers of true opera. For a beautiful melody is but a part of an opera which contains many and varied strands of interest held together by their truth to the story and their power of lighting up the moments of the drama as it unfolds.

Verdi's power of writing vigorous attractive melody he always possessed and his early operas were produced so long ago that they preceded the early operas of Wagner. Those early operas do not, however, give any impression of how great a musician he could be. He continued to develop his latent powers throughout

his long life. He developed picturesque power in his music, dramatic feeling and a power of drawing character without losing his wonderful gift of melody, until his works expressed undreamed-of beauties. *Falstaff*, written when he was eighty, is full of a spirit of youth and fun. The most complicated pieces sound simple, for Verdi was a complete master of the art of writing counterpoint and could write a fugue with amazing skill, sounding not as we might expect a fugue to sound, perhaps rather dry and complicated, but full of melody and gaiety. He was also one of the few composers who was a complete master of the orchestra and his later works show extraordinary imaginative beauty.

CHAPTER XXIV

SCHUMANN AND BRAHMS

THE six contemporary composers so near each other in age—Berlioz, Chopin, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Liszt and Wagner—represented to the world a new era in music. Of these six Robert Schumann (1810–1856) made an ineffaceable impression on his generation in a way quite different from the others. His almost excessively quiet nature, his sense of humour, his poetical feeling and the nobility of his outlook, all these combined in a sympathetic dreamy person who was incapable of conflict such as surrounded the lives of Berlioz and Wagner, and incapable too of the commanding position attained by Mendelssohn and Liszt. But his imaginative and sometimes fanciful music, his sincere criticism and warm appreciation of other musicians earned for him a position of great respect and of warm admiration and affection all over Europe.

He composed music from his childhood onwards, he wrote poetry, he read a great deal, he arranged performances with his friends, and when he was sent to study law in Leipzig he gave by far the greater part of his time to music. He loved Bach's piano works for their depth of feeling and acquired an intimate knowledge of them. He took piano lessons from Wieck, then the best teacher in Leipzig, and when finally his mother

allowed him to take up music as a profession, it was to Wieck that he went and it was in Wieck's house that the great romance of his life began, his love for Wieck's young daughter, Clara.

For several years Schumann was an intimate friend of the Wieck family, welcomed as much for his light-hearted gaiety as for his music, for Wieck's household was in some ways severe. Wieck himself was a wonderful teacher and his daughter Clara became the first woman pianist of the day owing largely to his teaching and fostering of her talent. He was, however, in some ways a very difficult person. He had quarrelled with his first wife and her children were seldom allowed to see her. By very hard work he had raised himself from great poverty to an important position in the musical world, but he was embittered by his contempt for musicians whose aims were lower than his own and by the many difficulties he had to surmount during his daughter's career. In spite of this his house was a centre of music, and for years it was a second home to Schumann.

A few months after taking up music seriously Schumann permanently injured one hand and was therefore unable to become a distinguished pianist, which was the aim he had set before himself. He therefore devoted himself to composing, and in 1833 he started a new musical activity, for he founded with a few friends a paper for musical criticism, the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*.

The music that was most generally heard early in the nineteenth century was certainly not the best. Pianists

played mostly brilliant but rather empty pieces by composers now quite disregarded ; light Italian opera was the most popular ; Bach was almost unknown to the public, and though Weber, Beethoven and Schubert had died not long before, no one appeared to pay any attention to their music. It was second-rate music that reigned in public performance and in public taste. The new paper founded by Schumann was to work to guide public taste into the appreciation of better music and new music, and so great was its success under Schumann's editorship that it soon had a large circulation and an important position. It discussed interesting subjects ; it criticized openly and sometimes severely music which was meretricious ; a famous instance of this was a caustic article on Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots*. It produced excellent notices of living musicians, Mendelssohn and Chopin among others. It welcomed new-comers ; some of the most remarkable instances are Schumann's article on Berlioz before he was well known, and his prophetic pronouncement about Brahms, then quite unknown. Many of the articles Schumann himself wrote are still well known as valuable literature on music.

Schumann composed at first in a rather desultory manner. At first, too, all his music was for pianoforte, short pieces, very original and with beauties that show an individual genius. Some of his best-known works are collections of short pieces, as *Carnival*, a series of vivid pictures of personalities and moods, *Kreisleriana*, *Kinder-*

scenen, *Fantaisiestücke* and *Faschingschwank*. He wrote, however, longer works ; his *Études Symphoniques*, an air with variations, has such beauty and feeling that it is still an important work for piano ; his *Fantaisie* is also a long and beautiful work, and he wrote as well piano sonatas.

In 1835 Mendelssohn settled in Leipzig and he and Schumann became great friends. Schumann had a great admiration and really warm affection for this contemporary. Indeed when Schumann gave affection he gave it with unchangeable feeling. The great affection of his life was for Clara Wieck, who became his wife in 1840. But the marriage only took place after years of struggle against her father's disapproval. All the bitter side of Wieck's nature came out in those years. He did his utmost to prejudice musical friends in different towns against Schumann and his daughter, and they had at last to appeal to the law to enable them to marry. This made a complete break with Wieck until in later years he appreciated Schumann's work as a composer, and wrote to his daughter saying that he wished to hear some of her husband's music.

The beauty of Schumann's nature and the warmth of his poetical feeling gradually made their way in the world through his music. There was little that was sensational about his fame, but on the rare occasions when he travelled with his wife to Russia, Austria and Holland his presence was the occasion for warm outbursts of appreciation.

Schumann's happiness was in the quiet domestic

life with his wife and children. Here he composed, saw his friends and made an atmosphere of wonderful happiness. He and his wife were devoted to each other. She felt that much of her life's work was to make his music known and understood, and her famous powers as a pianist she retained throughout her long life. She still seems near to people of the present day, for she only died in 1896, and two well-known English pianists, Leonard Borwick and Fanny Davies were her pupils.

The married life of the Schumanns was full of music which set a high standard to their contemporaries ; it was, however, very short. Schumann, who had always been highly strung, evidently exhausted his nervous strength in his constant flow of composition, and then came terrible times of nervous weakness when he heard continually music and sounds in his head and could get no rest. Repose from work, change and treatment had, however, a beneficial effect, and whenever he was well enough he worked with renewed pleasure. No one foresaw the tragedy that was coming. In 1854 he had a prolonged fit of nervous depression and seemed to be conscious that he was not able to control his actions, for he several times asked his wife to leave him in case he should do her harm. Each time she did so and returning found him glad to see her again. But at a moment when no one was with him he left the house and made an attempt to drown himself. He spent the last two years of his life in an asylum. An increasing pressure on his brain proved incurable and from it he died.

To his friends and contemporaries it seemed an unspeakable tragedy. In those last years he was not allowed to see his wife and children for fear the excitement might retard his possible recovery, and his brightest moments were during the visits of two devoted friends, Joachim the violinist, afterwards well known in England, and Brahms, then a young musician fully appreciated only by a few musicians. Joachim had been a friend of the Schumanns for years, and many happy hours had been spent making music in their house. Brahms was a new friend, but his devotion to the Schumanns became a part of his life. All that could be done to cheer Schumann by visits he did, he also did all he could to alleviate Clara Schumann's sorrow and loneliness. Her six children were too young to be in any sense her companions when Schumann's last illness began, and she had to work hard playing at concerts to make the money necessary for the care of her family and her husband. Friends who loved Schumann did indeed offer help in money. Mendelssohn was dead, but his brother wrote with great sympathy, as did others. Madame Schumann felt that she ought to make her own way, and through those years of pain and difficulty before and after the death of her husband Brahms was an invaluable friend.

It is not only as a composer for the piano that Schumann is known. His piano works were his greatest contribution to music. Besides those already mentioned, the album of pieces for young players, com-

posed for his children, is loved by everybody and contains some of the best children's pieces that exist. His concerto for piano is a beautiful work, very vivid and effective. The list of other well-known piano pieces such as the *Humoresques*, *Papillons* and *Romances* is too long to enumerate.

But as well as his pieces for piano he wrote some lovely songs when he was first married. He also wrote for orchestra. His symphonies are not considered his best work but his music to *Manfred* is true orchestral music. He also wrote some chamber music, one piece is a lovely quintet, also an opera, *Geneveva*, which was not very successful though it contains many beauties. He wrote, too, works for voices and for the Church, all of which have beauty.

His music has a poetical and pictorial quality which makes it typical of what is known as the romantic school, to which also most of his contemporaries belong. The romantic feeling in music is unlike the classical feeling for form felt by Haydn and carried to such perfection by Mozart and Beethoven. Schumann's music in the first place seems to give us pictures of moods and people, and always with the utmost delicacy.

To this generation his music is not always so sympathetic as it was to listeners fifty years ago, but the beauty of feeling in his greater works like the Fantaisie and Études Symphoniques, the perfection of his songs and the charm of much of his other work, make him one of the great geniuses of music. Though many of his

shorter works may seem on a small slight scale, their originality and simple beauty show Schumann's clear and lovely nature and his power of expressing true feeling.

When speaking of " absolute music " people usually mean that music which depends entirely on musical sound. It is not an accompaniment to words, it conveys no ideas nor does it describe or convey a poetic conception which can be described in words. The simplest form of absolute music is a melody ; for example, in the slow movement of Beethoven's sonata in E (Op. 109), though it might be possible to describe in words the moments of climax or expectation, it is not possible to think of the music as conveying any idea, any concrete picture or thought; it is just pure or " absolute " music. It creates a state of mind we could not convey in words and has definite beauty.

One composer whose gifts lay entirely in writing music like this was Johannes Brahms (1833–1897). His chamber music (some of the most perfect he wrote), sextets, quintets, quartets, trios and sonatas for strings, piano and clarinet are well known and have moments of exquisite beauty. So have a large number of his works for piano, his symphonies and songs and his well-known German Requiem. All of his music does not now seem to us convincing. Some sounds beautifully finished but lacks warmth of feeling and seems dry in consequence. But his aim was uplifted and his work sincere and he made a great impression on

those who knew him, even on people who did not find his music very moving. Musicians like Joachim the violinist, Schumann and Liszt recognized his genius and welcomed it warmly, and Brahms early in life attained a commanding position due to his direct personality and the sincerity of what he wrote.

Madame Schumann was one of the first players to make his piano works popular, and they took some time to become so. She was also one of the few people who really knew Brahms. His life was solitary and independent and very uneventful. Though so poor when young that he was forced to play nightly at a public place of entertainment, he had good teachers and worked hard at piano playing and composing. When he was twenty he accompanied a Hungarian violinist on tour, and met Joachim, who invited the young man to come and see him. Brahms went and was given letters to Schumann and Liszt, which made a great change in his life. Schumann helped to get some of his compositions published, he also wrote an article in his important musical paper welcoming Brahms as a new genius. This recognition by older musicians was the beginning of Brahms' successful career. For some years he made an income by playing in public and teaching. He also directed the Court concerts for Prince Lippe Detmold. At last he went to Vienna, which became his home. Except for musical tours he only went away for holidays, and much of his holidays he spent near Madame Schumann.

His invariable habit in the summer was to rise at four in the morning and walk in the country, and it was then all his melodies and most beautiful ideas came to him and he was able to write them down when he returned home during the morning. He always took his meals in restaurants and liked to be joined by his friends, and except for his many friends his life was very solitary. He lived alone, and as soon as he could make enough money by playing and composing he gave up teaching. He refused many engagements as conductor in order not to tie himself in any way, but be free for his regular life of composing. His good health only failed after Madame Schumann's death. He caught a chill at her funeral and developed an illness from which he died in 1897. He was buried in Vienna near Beethoven and Schubert.

Brahms is always regarded as the last great German composer who had the classic aim of an exterior ideal of beauty. Beauty of form and style is perhaps most demanded in long works for concerted instruments, and it is in such works that Brahms excelled. It is by his chamber music that he most enriched the literature of music, and by it he will always be remembered.

Some of his short pieces for piano are the most well known of his work: his waltzes and Hungarian dances. They are tuneful, vivid, attractive music, which show Brahms' power of producing beautiful work in a simple form.

CHAPTER XXV

SOME RUSSIAN COMPOSERS

DURING Liszt's years in Weimar much music was brought to his notice, music by new composers and from different countries. Music by Russian composers was then hardly known outside Russia until Berlioz produced some works by Glinka, and Liszt played compositions by Borodin and Balakireff.

Glinka (1803–1857) was the earliest Russian composer of this time whose work did not imitate the Italian opera prevalent at the Russian Court. His aim was to produce music that was really Russian. Russia was a storehouse of folk-melodies. The peasants and workmen of every kind had numberless songs, those from one part of Russia varying very much from those of another part of that large country. Many of these have now been collected and some are well known. Glinka had heard much of this Russian folk-music in his youth from the peasants at his father's country home, and when he settled in St. Petersburg in 1834 he determined to produce Russian music founded on Russian melodies and their rhythms and really national in character.

He had a group of friends whose aims were like his own, among them the now well-known writers Pushkin and Gogol. Glinka studied all the different music he

could, both German and Italian, in order to acquire facility in writing and so be able to carry out his aim. His first great work was an opera, *A Life for the Czar*, the libretto based on a story taken from Russian history and the music founded on Russian folk-song. It became very popular and Glinka continued writing other operatic and orchestral works with the same ideals and added power.

Among his friends were several younger men who carried on his aims. The earliest of them is Balakireff. Balakireff (1837–1910) was a cultivated musician who exercised a great influence on his contemporaries, Borodin, Moussorgsky and Rimski-Korsakoff. Living in St. Petersburg he was the centre of a group of musicians who each in his own way wished to produce national music and who succeeded so well that their works had an originality and power which has made many of them known and liked all over Europe. Balakireff himself wrote beautiful songs. His most famous work is a symphonic poem, *Thamar*, which he dedicated to Liszt, and a piano fantaisie, *Islamez*, often played by Liszt. Not only was he a power among his friends and a composer of many beautiful works, but he founded the free school of music in St. Petersburg and started a series of concerts for poor people, for the prices of tickets for orchestral concerts in Russia were so high that no poor person could afford to buy them.

One of Balakireff's pupils and his great admirer was Borodin (1834–1887). His first symphony, written

after he had been studying with Balakireff, made his name famous in Germany, and Liszt wrote to him praising it. Borodin wrote lovely songs and other works. His best-known composition is his opera *Prince Igor*. He was not interested in recitative; he liked melody and straightforward simple music, and *Prince Igor* is full of such music and it has had a great popularity.

The most original and the most gifted of these Russian composers was Moussorgsky (1839–1881). His two best-known works are his operas *Boris Godounoff* and *Khovantchina*. They are realistic pictures of that unchanging Russian life which English people know vividly from Russian writers. What to us is an almost barbarous tyranny, the inevitable rebellion against it, religious fervour of a kind unknown in more educated nations, all these are expressed vividly and realistically, and the emotion underlying the everyday life of most simple people is conveyed with a force and directness that Moussorgsky alone has ever produced.

Two other Russian composers of this time are well known, Tschaikowsky and Anton Rubinstein. These two had not the same aims as the friends and followers of Glinka and Balakireff. Tschaikowsky (1840–1893), whose work was famous all over Europe long before he died, was not interested in Russian music until he was grown up. He loved Italian opera and he adored Mozart. It was not until he was twenty-one that he first began to study composition seriously and realize

that music was to be his life's work, and in 1863, when he gave up his post in the Ministry of Justice, he had to face real poverty while he devoted himself to his art. He had, however, good friends ; he was soon appointed Professor at the Conservatorium in Moscow by the head, Nicholas Rubinstein, who produced all his compositions as they were written.

Tschaikowsky travelled a great deal. He came several times to England as well as visiting other European countries. Whenever he left Russia he suffered from home-sickness, and was always glad to get back to his own country and the little country house which for years he had longed to possess.

He had a very emotional personality, and it is this that comes out in his works. The pathetic symphony and the B♭ minor piano concerto have an almost realistic emotional intensity. They are among his best-known works, but others which are perhaps equally popular and more beloved are those of lyrical beauty, the *Casse Noisette* suite and his opera *Eugene Oniegin*. His chamber music, his symphonies and overtures are still heard at concerts, and there is a certain warm sensuous vividness about them that gives them a direct appeal.

Anton Rubinstein (1830–1894) was one of the greatest pianists the world has ever known. From the age of nine he played in public, at the age of eighteen he was appointed Court pianist, and he constantly went on Concert tours. He was famous as a pianist and

composer all over Europe and America, and though his compositions are not now considered very important, his playing must have been wonderful; he had such power over his instrument and was able to convey so vividly the feeling of what he played that he always roused his audience to enthusiasm. He wrote many operas which are not now heard, but some of his songs have real beauty and some of his pieces for piano show his great mastery of the instrument.

Two later Russian composers have become well known in the present day, Scriabine and Stravinsky. Scriabine won fame as a pianist and wrote a good deal for his instrument. He produced music which is often beautiful in sound though the feeling does not seem very interesting, and his work sometimes sounds disconnected. It is like meeting well-known feelings, not specially moving but in lovely modern dress.

Stravinsky has become known through his music for ballets. This music has imaginative charm, but his other orchestral work, while it shows how complete is his command of orchestral effect, also shows his lack of personal aim or ideal. Some of it gives the impression of a retrograde movement in art expressing sensuous force without beauty of feeling or gaiety of spirit, and his music for ballets remains the most interesting that he has produced.

Music has special characteristics, among them the power to give pleasure, and to arouse states of mind; but the kind of pleasure produced by such sounds as

excite a negro warrior to frenzied and passionate acts can certainly not be compared favourably with the kind of pleasure produced by really lovely sound such as a melody of a folk-song or a Mozart aria. Though these seem the extremes of musical expression, ordinary listeners who care for musical sound can find in modern music similar differences of quality, if not quite so extreme, and realize, quite apart from a composer's power to convey emotion, a sense of what underlies his music and whether it has a true poetic beauty or not.

CHAPTER XXVI

SOME MODERN COMPOSERS

AS music grows and develops each composer shows in his work partly the influences of other composers, whose music he has studied, and also his own individual way of writing, and the special beauties he is able to express. In modern music it is interesting to see how some composers are influenced by Bach, some by Liszt, others by Wagner, and so on. But this is only an interest of a special kind. For the ordinary listener, and indeed for every lover of music, the greatest interest lies in realizing what a work conveys apart from the way it is written, which is, as it were, only its dress. Some works convey nobility of feeling, some a lighter beauty, and each worthy composition gives us some beautiful feeling. In this way we find which works give us special pleasure and which composers rouse our interest.

There are so many modern composers whose work is of interest that it is only possible to mention a few of the outstanding names of each nationality, and among them must be mentioned a few who are not modern in the strict sense, but whose music belongs very much to the present day.

FRANCE AND BELGIUM

Not many years after the birth of the famous composers Schumann, Liszt and Wagner, a French composer was born who also became famous, though his work has not had such a far-reaching effect as theirs had. This was Charles François Gounod (1818–1893). He had brilliant gifts which made him successful both as a student and later in life. As a student he studied composition with the same master as Berlioz, and, like Berlioz, he won a prize which took him for some years to Rome. When he returned to Paris he was able to produce whatever works he wrote. His great success, the work which made him famous and which is still well known, is his opera *Faust*. He wrote this when he was forty, and he never afterwards wrote anything with the same power. Though he lived to be an old man, his music did not develop and does not seem to us at all modern in feeling. The music of *Faust* shows Gounod's individual gifts and power. Some of the scenes have beautiful music, some make an almost over-sweet sentimental effect. It is not a work that gives an impression of equal power throughout, but it has great beauties. The music is extraordinarily effective and is written by a master hand. Gounod was a very cultivated man. He studied the music of Schumann and Berlioz, finding it new and interesting, and he took a great interest in music for choirs, having been much influenced by the music of Palestrina he

had heard while in Rome. It was this love of choral music that led to his writing a work which is well known in England, *The Redemption*. He lived for some years in England and started the choral society which is now known as the Royal Choral Society.

Contemporary with Gounod but very different from him was the Belgian composer César Franck (1822–1890). As well as being a most learned and gifted musician, Franck was also a great teacher, and both as a teacher and composer has had a great effect on modern music. Quite indifferent to fame, content to live a quiet but laborious life, he existed as it were in a world apart, a world where criticism or lack of appreciation of his work never touched him and where he was in constant communion with the beautiful sounds he produced. In that way his was the life of a mystic, and mystic is much of the beauty that his works convey. He was absolutely free from jealousy and enthusiastically admired not only the great classical masters, but Berlioz and Wagner and many less well-known operatic writers.

Though always poor this never stopped his work. He taught for ten hours a day to make money and yet found time to compose constantly. For thirty-two years he was organist of St. Clothilde, in Paris, and pursued his quiet regular life inspiring his pupils and producing works which are full of beauty. One of the best known is his symphony in D. His quintet and quartet for strings and his violin and piano sonata

are also famous, as are his beautiful works for piano, *Prelude aria and finale* and *Prelude chorale and fugue*, and his many works for organ and for voices. The best known of these last is *Les Béatitudes*. Unknown to the world at large, but the greatest musical genius of his day, his life was devoted to music, to writing it and to making those with whom he came in contact understand more of the expanding power of expression in musical sound. When he died in 1890 his funeral was, like his life, quiet and unnoticed by any official ceremony.

César Franck's lovely music, still the inspiration of later composers, is the work of a musician who was an absolute master of counterpoint. The themes he interweaves are so melodious that to some listeners who are inclined to think that tune is one thing and the combined tunes of counterpoint another, it is an added delight to realize the beauty of his tunes sounding with such clearness against each other, one as it were lifting the other until the music soars. He wrote one opera, *Hulda*, which is full of lovely music. His works for organ are beautiful, and he left a great deal of music of many kinds, worthy of study and filled with beauties he alone could give. He was a very learned musician, but his learning was not confined to the works of the classical masters he loved. He was equally interested in modern works, and his own compositions are full of new and lovely effects.

Another French musician whose name is well known is Charles Camille Saint-Saëns (born 1835). For

some time he was organist at the Madeleine, for many years he was one of the most famous pianists of his day, and he was a very learned and extraordinarily gifted musician. His best-known composition is the opera *Samson et Dalila*, and as a composer of many instrumental works he has shown his outstanding power to produce brilliant effect.

A later French musician who now has a world-wide fame is Claude Debussy. Debussy did not expand the resources of musical sound but he took a special kind of sound and made it peculiarly his own, and in that medium he has written some lovely music. His *Après-midi d'un faune* is beautiful music and a perfect representation of the glowing feeling of the countryside on a warm summer day. His opera *Pelléas et Mélisande* is sound enhancing Maeterlinck's words with great effect. It is unlike any other opera, for it gives no effect of tune but it is always harmonious and appealing. His quartet is lovely in a way all its own. It gives the impression of a flow of really lovely sound; unspoilt as is so much music of the present day by any forced feeling or straining for effect, it conveys a delicate and constant beauty.

A French composer of genius whose work belongs to an earlier time, but whose name cannot be omitted, was Bizet (1838–1875). His famous opera, *Carmen*, was produced the year he died, when he was only thirty-seven. He understood and used Wagner's method of writing opera with its leading themes, but the many

beauties of his work are all his own. *Carmen* is a brilliant opera. The use of the orchestra is most expressive, the rhythms are vivid and beautiful and the whole work has a vitality, clearness and force that give it a unique position. It is performed everywhere and loved for the finished way the music is written and the vivid sense of life it conveys.

GERMANY

The composers in Germany who have grown up since Brahms are in some ways too near to us for complete judgment of their works. The most famous of modern German composers is Richard Strauss. He is well known as a writer of symphonic poems and operas. The first opera that brought him fame was *Salome*. The music accentuates the horror of the story and is at times extraordinarily effective. His later operas, *Electra* and *Rosenkavalier*, were written to very long complicated poems, but they have straightforward melodies and moments of great vividness. His symphonic poems are in some ways his best works. In them his power of climax and dramatic effect is most vivid without being marred by the extraordinary complexity which marks some of his scores where one part or theme is piled upon another without the consummate skill that enabled Wagner to make such complicated effects still clear and convincing. He has a great power of dramatic orchestral effect and great mastery of orchestral writing.

Another German composer whose music has a completely different effect is Humperdinck (1854–1921). His one successful opera, *Hänsel und Gretel*, is enchanting. The music is written in Wagner's manner but sounds so simple and natural and melodious, so full of musical beauty, that the effect is entirely the outcome of Humperdinck's own individuality. One other work of his is well known, a fairy play with incidental music full of delicate charm, called *Königskinder*.

Arnold Schönberg is a modern German composer whose music still causes much discussion. It is so unusual and in parts so dissonant in sound that at a first hearing it is very difficult to judge. Some of it is undoubtedly moving and it gives an impression of sincerity and conviction.

NORWAY

A name well known among those of modern composers is Edvard Grieg. His is not music on a large scale, but it is the music of a cultivated writer with an individuality of delicacy and charm, and it has a national feeling like the simplicity of Northern folk-songs. Grieg's pianoforte concerto is a brilliant work, his violin sonatas are full of melody, his suites for orchestra to Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* are picturesque and individual, and perhaps best known are his songs and short pianoforte pieces, with a distinction of their own which has made them widely known.

ENGLAND

A very well-known name among those of English composers is that of Sir Arthur Sullivan (1842–1900). His world-wide fame rests on his songs and the comic operas in which he collaborated with W. S. Gilbert. He was a composer with very great gifts. His genius for charming melodies and rhythms and the beautiful way he uses the orchestra make these works lovely music, and the pleasure as well as amusement that they give come from the beautifully finished writing and shape, and the inspiration that underlies them.

An English composer whose music has individual and great beauty is Sir Hubert Parry. His most famous compositions are for voices. They have a peculiar quality of sincerity and such power that they make a moving impression alike on educated and uneducated hearers. He has left many works which from the first note give a wonderful impression of dignity, beauty and uplifted feeling.

Another composer whose works for voices will always be enjoyed is Sir Charles Villiers Stanford. His choral ballad *The Revenge* and his *Songs of the Sea* are among the best known of his works, and they are loved everywhere. Of the several operas he wrote *Shamus O'Brien* is the best known and the most interesting.

Among contemporary English composers the best known is undoubtedly Sir Edward Elgar. The compo-

sition which brought him fame was his setting of *The Dream of Gerontius*, but the works which show his greatest mastery and are his most purely musical productions are his *Enigma* variations, his violin concerto and his orchestral works. These have great beauties and are vivid and original.

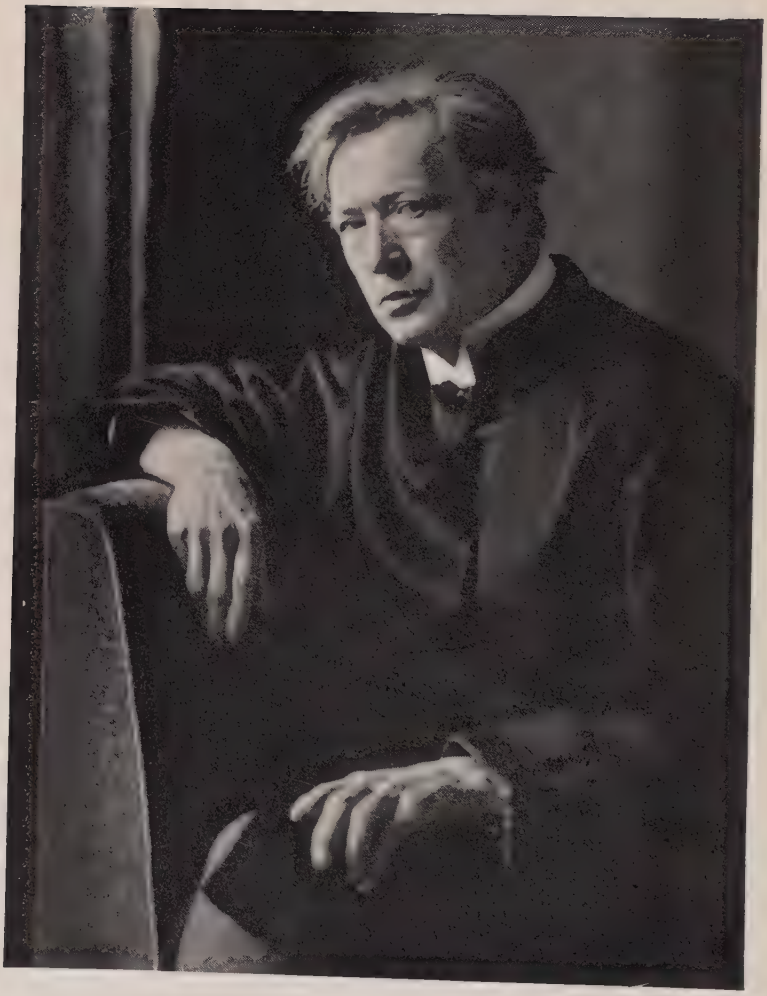
A contemporary composer whose work has a feeling peculiarly English and is some of the finest of present-day music in England is Vaughan Williams. His work is melodious and rhythmic in a vivid way. The music he has written for chorus is dignified and moving and his opera, *Hugh the Drover*, is a beautiful work that every one can enjoy, both ordinary listeners and cultivated musicians.

Another composer who has written some lovely music is Frederick Delius. English by birth, though his father belonged to a Dutch family, his music is not very well known in England, but it has a wonderful sense of beauty and at times a serenity of feeling of a most moving kind.

Some of the best known of his works are *Appalachia* and *Brigg Fair* for orchestra ; *Sea-drift* and *Song of the High Hills* for chorus and orchestra, and his opera *A Village Romeo and Juliet*. All of these have great beauties.

ITALY

The best known of modern Italian composers is undoubtedly Giacomo Puccini (1858), whose operas *La*



Ferruccio Busoni

Bohème and *Madame Butterfly* have a world-wide fame. They are full of lovely melodies and of music written with great musicianship. Puccini came from a family of famous musicians; he showed his exceptional gifts at an early age and had a short opera performed in Milan before he was thirty. *La Bohème* made him famous, and melodies from that opera sung by the greatest singers of our day show his amazing powers of writing music that seems to us peculiarly Italian, music so admirably written for the voice, melodies which are beautiful and moving.

Italy has produced one modern composer of outstanding power, Ferruccio Benvenuto Busoni. In an age of many excellent pianists, Busoni has had a place apart. Not only had he extraordinary command over this instrument and magical and infinitely varied qualities of tone, but he possessed a unique power of recreating the music he played. In his hands a Mozart concerto, a Beethoven sonata or a work of Bach's expressed beauties and depth of feeling unimagined by his hearers and by other performers. His vivid intelligence and the force of his personality were given with complete generosity in the interpretation of any work. In later years it was not only as a pianist but as a composer that he was well known. His operas are popular in Germany, and the last is specially interesting, for it expresses the new use of sound and new beauties for which he had so long worked.

His music gives the impression of a new outlook in

sound, and the few articles he wrote on the future of music suggest many possibilities of new combinations in sound and new uses of sound. Busoni foresaw the possibilities of music when it is set free from a sense of definite key, the new sounds possible from the combination of different existing scales, the possibilities of new tunings of the scale, the fresh counterpoint still to be written with these new sounds, and all these as yet undeveloped possibilities being used to express and convey those inward feelings which can only be expressed by music, for music expresses without limitations of sight or idea. Opera which has so long been regarded as either the reign of the voice, or the supremacy of a story, and in its greatest manifestations as the interplay of characters, was in Busoni's vision the only really complete way of conveying human personality. The outward story, so moving to the eye, roused dramatic feelings, but the picture was only completed by music which conveyed the inner feelings of the situations and therefore made a complete whole; the music was no longer in any sense an accompaniment of words or story, or an enhancement of them, but an independent art using limitless resources to convey in beautiful form other emotions, other feelings not capable of being conveyed by the words of a drama but which when present enrich the drama with the vision possible only to an artist, and that artist a musician.

It seemed as if he saw the possibility of writing music that should not be tied to themes or keys. The use

of themes is as it were but a form of repetition and the use of keys but a method of giving the mind a sense of unity, both limitations necessitated by the limitation of listeners' powers. Now, if listeners are sufficiently open to the power of sound, it should be possible for them to follow music without aids of repetition and unity, music that changes constantly and has one beautiful rhythm after another, one beautiful passage of melody after another and one lovely passage of massed sound following another. In all these ways the music should grow by itself, each rhythm, melody and body of sound opening a vision to the mind, and instead of following that vision or repeating the sounds the music moves to fresh visions and fresh stirring of emotion. Such music could only be written by composers with visions to express and such sound would convey the true spirit of music, its poetic power to show the inexhaustible, limitless beauties of emotion and feeling. Such music seems to be the music to Busoni's last opera, *Faust*. It has been described as a new and beautiful use of sound with constantly changing vistas and vision.

Busoni foresaw infinite possibilities of lightness and gaiety in sound, should the right genius arise to express it. Much depth of feeling has been expressed in modern music, but little of that gaiety of spirit and lightness of heart that lie beyond that depth and beyond the changing moods and feelings of human existence.

As we listen for the first time to a great work by one of the old masters certain beauties and interests are perceived by us. It may be only just at a few isolated moments during the work that our interest is arrested and a definite mood roused in us. The rest flows past us without any special effect. It is the kind of sound we are accustomed to and therefore not unpleasing.

It is the same when we listen to new works of the present day, only in these there is the difference that probably much of the sound is not what we are accustomed to, and we therefore have a less calm impression of its flow at first, but still as we listen now and then some change of sound, some unexpected entry of a note makes a vivid impression of beauty. New music that gives these moments and at repeated hearings continues to give such beauties and increase them, such music is opening fresh storehouses of beauty and shows its power to rouse those stimulating moving feelings which wake in response to beautiful sound.

APPENDIX

FORM IN MUSIC

Form in music means the symmetry which occurs in some musical works and gives balance to the work, or any other means by which the work is unified. For instance one, of the simplest symmetrical shapes or forms in music is called rondo form. It comes from an old dance where a certain part of the dance is repeated at regular intervals to the same tune, and in between come parts of the dance to different contrasting melodies.

The shortest example of this form and one in which many songs are written is to have the tune once, then the contrasting music, then the first tune repeated. An example of this can be heard in the air to " The Blue Bells of Scotland." Here the first tune accompanies the first line, it is repeated for the second line of the verse, the contrasting music accompanies the third line and the first tune returns again for the fourth line.

A longer example of this form can be seen in the last movement of Beethoven's pianoforte sonata called the Waldstein. Here the long beautiful melody occurs several times and has different contrasting music between each repetition.

Symmetrical form of more complicated structure is naturally found most fully developed in music for instruments alone, in what is sometimes called symphonic, sometimes absolute music. Such music is accompanied by no words or acting and depends on the power of the sound to convey structure, balance and unity. The most developed form of this kind is sonata form. The form does not affect the meaning of the piece or movement. Different pieces in sonata form express entirely different feelings, their likeness only consists in their using certain accepted contrasts in the melodies employed and their employing similar

balanced repetitions of these melodies. It is as if the composer accepted a certain exterior ideal, a recognized structure, as well as the personal ideal of expressing what he wished to express. Even so composers who did write in accepted sonata form all made differences and variations in that form according to their need of expression, but in certain elements the form is clear.

In sonata form there is a first subject or melody in the accepted key of the piece. This is followed by a contrasting subject or melody (either one or several) in a different, contrasting key. After this comes a part sometimes quite different from the subjects, but where sometimes parts of both first and second subjects occur, usually in different keys and showing these parts of the subjects in new light and with new meanings. Then occurs the repetition of the subjects, this time usually both in the original key and certainly ending in the original key in which the piece started. One of the most simple examples of this form is the first movement of Beethoven's pianoforte sonata in G major (Op. 14, No. 2). Here there is a clear subject in G major, a long second subject in D major ending at a double bar, then a long part of the movement where parts of the two subjects are easily recognized, and at last both subjects repeated in G major.

Another well-known form is fugue. This form varies very much in length and in the way the subject or principal melody is used, but it is all based on one theme or subject (except in the rare cases of double or triple fugues where two or three subjects are used), and all fugues begin alike, that is, the subject or melody is given alone by one " voice " or part, and then by each " voice " in turn. After that the same subject occurs often throughout the fugue, in different keys and in the different voices or parts, high or low ; and now and then between the repetitions of the subject come passages of contrasting melody called episodes. It is a wonderful form for personal expression. Pieces in this form from the hands of lesser composers are sim-

ply dry and uninteresting; only the greatest composers have shown the power to choose such a subject or melody for a fugue that they can reveal from that one subject constantly varied and heightened beauties, so that starting with a single voice they gradually pile up from the one melody such a wealth of meaning that the whole work reveals a unity and a sense of increasing beauty and meaning to the final climax.

A wonderful example of this can be seen in the fugue which forms the last movement of Beethoven's pianoforte sonata in A♭ (Op. 110). Here the subject starts alone, stealing in as it were from a distance with a feeling of certainty and unrevealed beauty. The repeated entries rise to a climax at last. Then, after a long contrasting music like a voice in broken phrases, the subject comes back inverted, as it is called, or as we might say upside-down, rising where before it fell and vice versa. Here it expresses a new beauty, a tenderness and poignancy unknown in its original form, and at last the first form of the subject is used again, parts of it are repeated with heightened intensity to the climax of the whole movement in the last few bars.

Other kinds of form are the "air with variations" and the short dance forms such as the "minuet and trio." A minuet and trio is two short dances, really both minuets, played one after the other and then the first repeated. The shape or form of each of these little dances usually depends on a balance of keys. The minuet starts in a given key and about half-way through the piece it moves to a contrasting key. The second part then starts in the contrasting key and moves back to the original key and ends in that. This short form usually occurs in each of the minuets.

An air and variations is a very simple form when the variations are thinly disguised versions of the air, but in some of the great works written in this form the variations are as it were poetic unfoldings of the theme. The theme in such variations

is not clearly recognized, and in fact is often not there, but each variation is like a contrast and a piece of added beauty or interest to the variation before until the whole becomes a long work made of the separate pieces, each expressing a meaning and feeling of its own, and culminating in the final variation or a separate short piece at the end which sums up the whole. Such are the *Études symphoniques* of Schumann, the C major variations of Beethoven, the Goldberg variations of Bach and the Paganini variations of Brahms.

It would be impossible to sum up the many variations that occur in any one of these now well-known forms. Sonata form was still so new in the time of Mozart that it is clearly emphasized in much that he wrote. But when Beethoven wrote works in this form it was with completely different effect. It was as if to him the meaning of every note and passage mattered so much that there was certainly no emphasis on the exterior ideal of form, rather the usually accepted structure was altered constantly, lengthened and changed to fit the substance and flow of what he had to say ; the balance and unity of his works were attained in more varied ways.

The classical feeling for form, for definite shape such as sonata form, was strong in Haydn and Mozart and still found adherents in Schumann and Brahms, but later composers have written much music which does not depend on such kinds of formal perfection ; it attains its balance and unity by a less fixed use of the themes employed and by more varied means.

The contrapuntal use of themes has a special power of giving unity and holding long works together. It has been wonderfully developed in a particular manner by Wagner and other later composers and has an inexhaustible power of development in new ways.

BOOKS FOR FURTHER READING

English Folksong	Cecil Sharp
English Madrigal Composers	E. H. Fellowes
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Shakespeare and Music	E. W. Naylor
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The Growth of Music	H. C. Colles
Studies of Great Composers	C. H. H. Parry
The Art of Music	C. H. H. Parry
History of Music in England	Ernest Walker
Autobiography of Karl von Dittersdorf Translated by	A. D. Coleridge
Studies in Modern Music. 2 Vols.	W. H. Hadow
The New Music	George Dyson
Von der Einheit der Musik	F. B. Busoni

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